

CURRENT HISTORY

A WORLD AFFAIRS JOURNAL

DECEMBER, 1984

Southeast Asia



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Current History

FOUNDED IN 1914

DECEMBER, 1984
VOLUME 83 NUMBER 497

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Current History

DECEMBER, 1984

VOL. 83, NO. 497

Ten years after the fall of South Vietnam, the countries of Southeast Asia still find the problems of Indochina dominating the region. As for United States policy toward the region, "the administration of President Ronald Reagan, taking up where President Jimmy Carter's administration left off, has viewed Southeast Asia primarily in terms of a global struggle against the Soviet Union. The United States now seeks to polarize the region between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet blocs, as it sought in the 1960's to polarize it into pro-Chinese and anti-Chinese states."

The United States and Southeast Asia

BY GARETH PORTER

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Johns Hopkins University*

DURING the Vietnam War era (1965–1975), Southeast Asia was a politically unstable area that many people thought would be a power vacuum after the American retreat from Vietnam. In the 1960's, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore faced strong armed insurgencies or Communist movements; Indonesia, the most populous of the five members, went through an attempted left-wing coup and a blood-letting in which hundreds of thousands of suspected Communists or sympathizers were killed. Malaysia suspended representative government in 1969 because of communal violence; Thailand witnessed the ouster of its authoritarian military government in 1973 after massive urban demonstrations. In the Philippines, President Ferdinand Marcos established martial law in 1972.

Nearly a decade after the end of the Vietnam War, however, the political landscape of the region has changed dramatically. With the notable exception of the Philippines, the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)* are self-confident, economically dynamic and internally stable. With a combined real growth rate of over seven percent per year during the 1970's, and with a total gross national product (GNP) of over \$100 billion, the ASEAN region has become the fifth largest trade partner of the United States. It is now an economic power that can bargain effectively for economic concessions from the industrialized countries.

Communist movements in Thailand, Malaysia, Indo-

*ASEAN was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei became the sixth member in 1983.

nesia and Singapore have either disappeared or have ceased to be a serious threat. No violent political change has taken place in the region since the right-wing military coup in Thailand eight years ago. Only in the Philippines does the combination of economic failure, political instability and insurgency portend violent change.

The major external security problem for ASEAN—the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea since 1979—is a direct consequence of the violent conflict among the Chinese, Vietnamese and Kampuchean Communist movements that emerged after 1975. The same Sino-Vietnamese tensions that precipitated Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Kampuchea also enhanced the security of the ASEAN states by inducing both Beijing and Hanoi to improve relations with ASEAN while abjuring support for Communist parties in the region. Vietnam's determination to assure the security of its client state in Kampuchea has come at the expense of its prospects for economic development; and despite its military strength, Vietnam is no longer capable of dominating the region.

A politically stable Southeast Asia gives the United States the opportunity to shift its policy away from conflict-oriented strategies and to put the emphasis on reducing regional conflict. At the same time, the deepening Soviet military role in Vietnam and the danger of military confrontation between Vietnamese and Thai forces in the Thai-Kampuchean border area make such a shift imperative. The United States, with its growing political, economic and military ties with China, its close relations with the ASEAN states, and its long-term importance to Vietnam, could play a constructive role in

seeking a compromise settlement of the Sino-Vietnamese and Kampuchea conflicts and thus contribute to regional peace and stability.

But the administration of President Ronald Reagan, taking up where President Jimmy Carter's administration left off, has viewed Southeast Asia primarily in terms of a global struggle against the Soviet Union.¹ The United States now seeks to polarize the region between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet blocs, as it sought in the 1960's to polarize it into pro-Chinese and anti-Chinese states. There is, however, a major difference between the Reagan administration's strategy toward the region and United States strategy during the Vietnam War era. Since the war, United States strategic interests have shifted from the mainland of Southeast Asia to an emerging strategic relationship with China and to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean regions.

In this new strategic context, the United States no longer wants to be directly involved in the conflicts with Indochina. Its primary concern in the region is to insure that the ASEAN states do nothing to hamper the United States ability to bring its military power to bear in conflicts with the Soviet Union or its allies outside the region. The Department of Defense's secret five-year defense plan, completed in 1982, indicated that United States aims with regard to the ASEAN states were to

foster the strength and cohesion of [ASEAN] counter [to] Vietnamese expansionism, while developing further the capacity of member countries to support the projection of

United States powers from the Western Pacific to the Indian Ocean and...the [Persian] Gulf.²

The tortuous wording of the second aim, according to a knowledgeable Defense Department source, refers to the two central United States military concerns in Southeast Asia: the unhampered use of United States air and naval bases in the Philippines and unimpeded transit through the Straits of Malacca, Sunda and Lombok, in order to insure the rapid deployment of United States forces to trouble spots in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf regions.

These military interests highlight the importance the United States places on relations with the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia in its global anti-Soviet strategy. The United States has long viewed its relationship with the Philippines as a "special relationship"—a term that suggests not only shared experiences and values, but also security interests that are considered vital to the United States.³ The "special" United States interests in the Philippines consist of a complex of naval, air and communications bases that are unmatched in scope and sophistication anywhere else in the world. The facilities at Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base have been given a new role with the appearance of the "rapid deployment force" strategy in the Gulf region.⁴

THE UNITED STATES AND THE PHILIPPINES

The Reagan administration's policy toward the Philippines was clearly shaped by its desire to renegotiate the agreement allowing continued use of the military bases. The previous base agreement, negotiated by the Carter administration in 1977, called for joint review every five years, and the new administration was eager to demonstrate its loyalty to the Marcos regime in anticipation of the 1983 negotiations. Vice President George Bush was sent to Manila in 1981, where he praised the regime's "adherence to democratic principles"; in 1982, Marcos was invited to the White House on a state visit.

These moves encouraged Marcos to tighten his grip, repressing his opponents and establishing his wife, Imelda, as his likely successor.⁵ In the spring of 1983, the United States reached an agreement with Marcos's government on the bases; the new terms required the administration to ask Congress for a five-year, \$900-million package of security and economic assistance to the Philippines. As in the previous agreement, this commitment virtually freed Marcos from any congressional pressures with respect to his human rights policies.

The United States also agreed that the Philippines should assume greater responsibility for the defense of the seas surrounding the islands.⁶ By turning over the patrolling of the eastern part of the South China Sea to an enlarged and modernized Philippine navy, the United States implicitly encouraged Manila to pursue more aggressively its claims to the Eastern Spratly Islands, which are contested by Vietnam as well as by China and Taiwan.⁷ But the United States and the Marcos regime were

¹For an analysis of the Carter administration's policy, see Gareth Porter, "The Decline of U.S. Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," *SAIS Review*, vol. 1, no. 1 (March, 1981), pp. 149-159.

²Quoted in Richard Nations, "Calling All Allies," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 18, 1982, p. 11.

³The term "special relationship" was used twice by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard L. Armitage in his statement to the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, June 8, 1982. The United States use of the term for the Philippines seems to parallel closely its use by Vietnam in reference to its relationship with Laos and Kampuchea.

⁴For official testimony on the value of the bases, see *United States-Philippines Relations and the New Base and Aid Agreement*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, 1983.

⁵See Ross H. Munro, "Dateline Manila: Moscow's Next Win," *Foreign Policy*, Fall, 1984, pp. 173-174.

⁶Marcos referred to this agreement in an interview reported in *Philippines Today*, an official publication of the Marcos regime, November 7, 1983. Marcos's assertion was confirmed by a Pentagon official interviewed for this article.

⁷The Philippines occupied two islands in the eastern part of the Spratly Islands and annexed a large area surrounding them in February, 1979. In an exchange of notes with the Philippines in 1979, the United States extended its security commitment to the Philippines to attacks on Pacific islands occupied by the Philippines as well as to Philippine aircraft and ship operations in areas of the Pacific outside Philippine home waters. See the statement by Professor George McT. Kahin, *United States-Philippines Relations and the New Base and Aid Agreement*, pp. 212-214.

forced to revise their military priorities because of the political and economic crises of the Marcos regime and the upsurge in the activities of the Communist New People's Army (NPA). With the sudden realization that the NPA was rapidly increasing its influence in the economically stagnant countryside, the United States refocused its assistance on problems of "counterinsurgency." For the first time, United States officials began to express serious concern about the ability of the armed forces of the Philippines to counter the NPA.

Meanwhile, the Reagan administration, shocked by the massive loss of confidence of the international financial community and the Filipino business community in the Marcos regime, changed its stance toward Marcos after the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino in August, 1983. Although the administration was careful not to contribute to the collapse of the regime, it encouraged public and private pressure on Marcos in 1984, urging him to make reforms that would regain the confidence of investors and international lenders: free and fair National Assembly elections in the spring of 1984, succession arrangements that would reduce the prospect that Imelda Marcos would succeed her husband, and a complete investigation of the Aquino assassination.

Marcos met all the major United States demands, but the combination of economic crisis, continued escalation of political opposition and the growing threat from the NPA indicates that the United States may have to take a more active role in the politics and government of the Philippines in the coming years.

MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA

Malaysia and Indonesia occupy key geographical positions in Southeast Asia because the major passages between the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean are located within their territorial waters. For well over a decade, the Indonesian and Malaysian governments (and Singapore) have claimed the authority to regulate shipping through the Malacca Straits and have resisted pressure from the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan for the internationalization of the Straits. Moreover, Indonesia, through the application of its "archipelagic principle,"⁸ has declared the Sunda and Lombok Straits to be territorial waters. The ability of the United

States to send warships through the vital Southeast Asian straits in a crisis thus depends ultimately on the consent of these littoral states.

The littoral members of ASEAN, unlike the Philippines and Thailand, have no mutual security agreements with the United States and belong to the nonaligned bloc in world politics. This explains why the Reagan administration puts equal emphasis on allies and non-allies in its public statements on relations with the ASEAN states. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard L. Armitage, explaining the administration's East Asian security strategy in 1981, said that it sought a

concert of security relationships with the countries of East and Southeast Asia, [which] must integrate the efforts of our alliance partners and, indeed, friendly states . . . who see their security interests ultimately paralleling our own.⁹

While such statements suggest that the ASEAN states are part of a "strategic consensus" with the United States on the security threat in East Asia and what should be done about it, there is no such consensus within ASEAN. While the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand can usually be counted on to support United States strategy toward the Soviet Union, Malaysian and Indonesian foreign policy perceptions and objectives differ sharply from those of the United States. Malaysia has been the region's primary proponent of a "Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality," which would exclude any external military presence from the region. Indonesia has also opposed the intrusion of a superpower military presence, in part because of its own desire to take on more responsibility for the region's security. Both are afraid that the United States may bring Soviet-American rivalry into the region.

The developments that followed the breakdown of Sino-Vietnamese relations in 1978, including the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, the Soviet Union's use of Vietnamese air and naval bases, and new tensions between Vietnam and Thailand over Kampuchea, have given the Reagan administration a new argument for integrating the littoral states of ASEAN into its overall strategy. In 1981, the administration charged that the Soviet Union intended to establish a "potential choking grip" on the sea-lanes running through Southeast Asia.¹⁰ After the Soviet Union deployed 10 Badger bombers to Vietnam's Danang Air Base in 1983, the administration declared that "Soviet surface combatants and attack submarines normally found at Cam Ranh Bay, combined with . . . aircraft deployments, present a clear and current danger to free world sea-lanes." Vietnam, meanwhile, has been portrayed as a Soviet "surrogate" that not only menaces Thailand with its army of more than one million men, but seeks to "obtain a stranglehold on the regions' [sic] resources to support its expansionist policies."¹¹

Malaysia and Indonesia have explicitly rejected United States views of the Soviet Union and Vietnam as

⁸For a discussion by an Indonesian specialist on the problem, see Hasjim Djalal, "Choke Points: The Straits and the Archipelagoes," *Lines of Communication and Security*, in Robert A. Brand, Patricia K. Hymson, and Hans H. Indorf, eds. (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1981), pp. 10-18.

⁹*U.S. Policy in Southeast Asia*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on East Asia and Pacific Affairs, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 1981, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰Armitage statement, June 8, 1982.

¹¹Statement by Paul D. Wolfowitz, Assistant Secretary of State, *Foreign Assistance Legislation for Fiscal Year 1985*, Hearings and Markup before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, 1984, pp. 8-9.

threats to the region. Both believe that the Reagan administration is obsessed with the Soviet threat in general and that the United States has exaggerated the danger of the Soviet military presence in Southeast Asia. They do not believe that the Soviet naval presence in the region is aimed at disrupting maritime traffic through the Straits of Malacca or the South China Sea; they see it as an effort to achieve equal status as a superpower with the United States. They also note that the Soviet naval presence in Vietnam is no match for the United States presence at Subic Bay in the Philippines.¹² Both governments have been unsympathetic to the Reagan administration's pressure on Japan to take over the defense of the sea-lanes up to 1,000 nautical miles from Japan's shores—well into Southeast Asian waters.

As for Vietnam, the Malay states believe that Vietnam's engagement in Kampuchea makes wider Vietnamese ambitions in the region extremely unlikely, if not impossible. They see Vietnam not only tied down in Kampuchea but dramatically weakened by the economic embargo imposed by the capitalist world and vulnerable to Chinese pressures.¹³ Moreover, a healthy Vietnam is seen as a necessary counterpoise to Chinese power.

The sharpest contradiction between the Reagan administration's anti-Soviet policy and the interests of the Malay states, however, has come over growing United States military ties with China. The administration's decision in mid-1981 to sell lethal military equipment to China sent shock waves through the littoral states. Malaysia, Indonesia and even Singapore were concerned that United States arms might end up in the hands of insurgent movements in the region. They also feared that the United States was aligning itself with a power that posed a potential threat to the region. Malaysia's Foreign Minister Ghazali-Shafie told journalists, "If the U.S. wishes to support China, in terms of global strategy, by all means do so. But if the Americans do not take into account Chinese designs in Asia, their assistance towards China may be negative towards us."¹⁴

The United States responded to the ASEAN opposition by arguing that the military sales to China would be handled on a case-by-case basis, that they would be limited to defensive purposes, and that in each case the United States would consult with the ASEAN states before making any decision. Both Assistant Secretary of State John Holdridge and former Secretary of State

Henry Kissinger reassured the three ASEAN governments that security cooperation with China would not be negotiated at the expense of the ASEAN states. But such assurance did little to allay the fears of Malaysia and Indonesia that United States anti-Soviet strategy cut across their own security interests.

Neither Malaysia nor Indonesia depends on United States military power for regional security. So the Reagan administration must rely on bilateral ties to secure both countries' cooperation with United States global military strategy. The United States sells arms to both countries and pays for the training of their military officers in the United States. (Between 250 and 300 Indonesian officers will be trained in the United States in fiscal year 1985.) But these links, while welcomed, are not the crucial factors that determine the Malay states' attitude toward the United States.

Economic ties are more important in cementing United States friendship in this area. The United States provides between \$65 million and \$70 million in bilateral development assistance annually to Indonesia, and far more aid indirectly through its contributions to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Malaysia is not an aid recipient, but it has benefited, as has Indonesia, from loans from consortia of private banks, in which United States banks have played a major role. In addition, both countries are eager for more American investment and hope to expand their exports to the United States. The cumulative importance to the two states of these economic relationships with the United States gives them some incentive for cooperating in a crisis, despite divergences of strategic interests.

THAILAND

Military ties are central to the United States relationship with Thailand. The United States has a security commitment to Thailand under the Manila Treaty of 1954 and the Rusk-Thanat agreement of 1962, and the Reagan administration, like its predecessor, has repeatedly declared its determination to maintain the commitment. In fact, however, the Thai have looked more to China than to the United States to deter the Vietnamese, since China's "pedagogical war" against Vietnam in February-March, 1979. Constantly increasing United

(Continued on page 436)

¹²Speech by Malaysian Foreign Minister Ghazali-Shafie at the Asia Society, April 16, 1981; interview with Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, March 27, 1983, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Asia and Pacific*, March 31, 1983.

¹³Interview given by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir, *Malaysian Digest*, July 31, 1981; interview with Mochtar by *NRC Handelsblad* (Rotterdam), March 8, 1982; FBIS, March 24, 1982.

¹⁴"Advice from an Old Hand," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 13, 1981, p. 41; see also *Malaysian Digest*, October 21, 1981.

Gareth Porter is the author of *A Peace Denied: The United States, Vietnam and the Paris Agreement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976) and editor of *Vietnam: A History In Documents* (New York: New American Library, 1981). He was professorial lecturer in Southeast Asian politics at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (1980-1985) and visiting associate professor of international studies at the City College of New York (1983-1984). He has traveled to Southeast Asia for research on international conflict in the region four times in the past six years.

"China's policies toward Southeast Asia are radically different from its past policies. Nonetheless, in terms of enhancing Chinese influence in the region, Beijing has not been very successful."

China and Southeast Asia

BY JOHN FRANKLIN COPPER

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IN contrast to the views of Chinese leaders toward Southeast Asia in 1949 (when the People's Republic of China was established), Beijing's present policies toward the region represent an about-face. The change of heart embraces the three Communist Indochinese nations—Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea (Cambodia); the non-Communist Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei (which became independent and joined the organization this year); and the outside powers—the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. Only relations with Burma—the odd man out in Southeast Asia—remain fairly stable.

China's posture toward Southeast Asia began to change in the mid-1950's after it became evident that its "lean to one side" policy was not very effective. Chinese leaders were also disappointed that Moscow rejected Chairman Mao Zedong's petition that Southeast Asia should be a sphere of Chinese influence (as East Europe was for the Soviet Union).¹

Nevertheless, throughout the Vietnam War China persistently supported Hanoi's "war of national liberation" even though Beijing and Hanoi disagreed about future power arrangements in the region. Chinese leaders also kept Sino-Soviet differences from interfering with Chinese aid for Vietnam. But the Sino-Soviet split was both serious and official in 1960, and after that date the foreign policy objectives of the Communist giants conflicted throughout the world.

After Hanoi's victory in 1975, Chinese policy toward the region began to change markedly, not only because

Hanoi's designs regarding its own sphere of influence apparently challenged Chinese objectives, but because China perceived Soviet gains with the Vietnamese leadership and wanted to pursue a new relationship with the United States. Sino-American détente followed the Nixon Doctrine,* which anticipated a different United States relationship with Asia. This, and the Brezhnev Doctrine, announced after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and implying the Soviet Union's right to invade any Communist country—including China—to preserve communism according to Moscow's definition of the term), changed Beijing's posture toward the superpowers.

The turning point was 1978. Following Hanoi's expulsion of thousands of Chinese from Vietnam (causing a serious refugee problem for China) and a Soviet-Vietnamese treaty (interpreted by most observers as a defense pact), China redefined Vietnam as an "enemy" and adopted more openly the attitude that the Soviet Union was trying to "surround and contain" China. Thus Beijing cut its economic aid to Hanoi, and diplomatic relations became strained.

Tension between Hanoi and Beijing escalated further in late 1978, when Vietnamese forces invaded Kampuchea and expelled the pro-China Communist government of Pol Pot. After Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping returned from a highly publicized visit to the United States in early 1979, he ordered the Chinese army to invade the northern part of Vietnam in retribution for the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. Chinese regular forces did not perform well against Vietnamese militia and reserves, although Deng managed to prevent Vietnam from consolidating its hold on Kampuchea. And Pol Pot survived—returning once again to the countryside (along the Kampuchea-Thailand border), once again to wage guerrilla warfare—this time against a Communist regime in the form of the Vietnamese-installed Kampuchean government of Heng Samrin. China subsequently promised and delivered arms to Pol Pot to help in that struggle.

After 1969, as a consequence of a new relationship with the United States and fighting on the border with the Soviet Union, China had begun to seek a more friendly

*Editor's note: In a November 3, 1969, speech, United States President Richard Nixon declared that the United States would no longer intervene directly with troops in Asia. For the full text of the speech see *Current History*, January, 1970, pp. 42-43, 50-52.

¹It is not well-documented that the Soviet Union acknowledged a Chinese sphere of influence in Southeast Asia. Mao may have made such a request or proposal during talks with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev when the latter struggled for power after Josef Stalin's death. Several scholars hint of such a proposal. Subsequent events suggest that Beijing at least thought there was such an agreement.

relationship with the non-Communist nations of Southeast Asia, mainly the five nations that had joined to form ASEAN in 1967. Commensurately, after the defeat of American forces in Vietnam, the ASEAN countries were compelled to adopt new policies, including treating China as a regional actor with whom they had to deal. Following Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea in 1978 they had even more reason to look favorably on the People's Republic of China—as a counterweight to Vietnam's military power. Some of them, however, were not convinced that China's friendly policies were permanent—and they remain unconvinced.

In terms of the global power struggle, in the late 1970's Beijing tilted toward the United States and adopted a friendly policy toward Japan and West Europe. This reflected increasing concern with the Soviet military threat in Asia and Soviet "hegemony" in Southeast Asia. In 1982, however, Chinese leaders announced an "equidistance" policy vis-à-vis the superpowers. Apparently they believed that they had aligned themselves too closely with the United States, thus undermining their relations with the third world while becoming a "card" for United States policymakers.² China also hoped it could cut costly defense preparations on its northern border. Thus Beijing pursued a rapprochement with the Soviet Union (reciprocated under Presidents Leonid Brezhnev and Yuri Andropov), though the rapprochement was linked to ending Soviet support for Hanoi's occupation of Kampuchea. Events in recent months indicate this has not worked.

THE INDOCHINA NATIONS

China's relationship with Vietnam, which Chinese leaders described during the 1950's and 1960's as "close as teeth and lips," suffered from some little noticed strains during the Vietnam War. Hanoi consistently played Beijing off against Moscow, while outside observers noted that China wanted to fight the war "to the last Vietnamese," having no real interest in ending the war quickly or in a total Vietnamese victory.

The combination of Vietnam's efforts to turn Laos and Kampuchea into "vassal states" under the guise of an Indochina Federation, the rise of Soviet influence in Hanoi, and China's new relationship with the United States changed China's policies toward Hanoi drastically in the early 1970's. It should also be recalled that it was

Soviet weapons that made Hanoi's victory over South Vietnam and the United States in 1975 possible and that Vietnam and China were historical enemies.

As a result, Chinese policymakers gave up their goal of a sphere of influence (if they ever had such a design), or control of the region with Hanoi as a surrogate. They also had to revise the domino theory (which was originally based on a Communist geopolitical perspective and was adopted, no doubt incorrectly, by the United States); they now warned against the danger of Vietnamese-Soviet or Soviet-Vietnamese hegemony. In the late 1970's the third world, including Southeast Asia, seemed to be secondary in Beijing's global strategic perspective (which was to build a "united front" with the United States, West Europe and Japan to cope with the threat of Soviet military expansion); but China revised this global view in the early 1980's, and Southeast Asia again assumed a more important role in Beijing's world outlook.³

One of the major reasons for China's shift in perspective was the Chinese leaders' disappointment with the United States reaction to their invasion of northern Vietnam in 1979. Deng had told President Jimmy Carter and other United States leaders and the American public (on television) that he planned to "teach Hanoi a lesson," and since no objection was voiced, he logically assumed that he had United States support. He was shocked when President Carter reacted by calling China's invasion "regrettable."

In lieu of an American "alliance" vis-à-vis Hanoi, Beijing increased its arms aid to Kampuchea's Communist Khmer Rouge forces and gave arms aid to opposition groups in Laos and reportedly in Vietnam itself.⁴ It also concluded a kind of military alliance with Thailand, promising that if Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea entered Thai territory (which they were prone to do because Pol Pot was using Thailand as a sanctuary), Chinese forces would again invade Vietnam. Subsequent visits by military leaders and tension on the Sino-Vietnamese border made this promise credible.⁵

Notwithstanding disappointment with Washington's weak stance and its lack of policy vis-à-vis Southeast Asia, Beijing supported the American economic pressure on Vietnam that was designed to force it to withdraw its troops (numbering 180,000 in the early 1980's) from Kampuchean territory. China also supported United Nations resolutions calling for a Vietnamese troop pullout and free elections to decide the fate of Kampuchea. Chinese leaders understood that there would be difficulties in returning the Khmer Rouge to power in view of their murderous policies during the period 1975 to 1978—even though they had proclaimed they were no longer Communist, had made mistakes, and were "reformed." Beijing, however, insisted that the Khmer Rouge, the most important component of the anti-Vietnamese resistance, could not be denied some role in a post-Vietnamese occupation government. The Chinese

²See John F. Copper, "New Directions in China's Foreign Policy Since the 12th Party Congress," *The American Asian Review*, Spring, 1983.

³See John F. Copper, "China's Global Strategy," *Current History*, September, 1981.

⁴China provided arms assistance to the Meo tribesmen in Laos and may have sent arms in 1982 and 1983 to former South Vietnamese soldiers operating as anti-Hanoi insurgents in southern Vietnam.

⁵See for example, "Wu Visits Pakistan and Thailand to Boost Morale," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 11, 1983, p. 12.

also advocated a military solution instead of negotiations, arguing that Hanoi would use negotiations to divide its opposition while trying to legitimize Kampuchea's Heng Samrin "puppet" regime.

In June, 1982, when the Khmer Rouge joined with former Prime Minister Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front and Prince Sihanouk's group to form an anti-Vietnamese coalition government-in-exile, Beijing supported the alliance. China later provided weapons and supplies to all three members of the "united front"—though its help to Son Sann and Sihanouk was patently less in both quantity and quality than its aid to the Khmer Rouge.⁶

In December, Khieu Samphan (who nominally replaced Pol Pot as head of the Khmer Rouge because of Pol Pot's worldwide association with genocide), Son Sann and Sihanouk visited Beijing and talked to Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Deng acted to bolster the unity of the alliance, which was strained because of its disparate nature and because of events in Kampuchea (including competition for local support and recruits and Vietnamese efforts to divide the coalition).

During 1983 and 1984, Vietnamese forces met with increasing difficulties in trying to counter the guerrilla operations of the alliance. Battles were waged further inside Kampuchea. Vietnamese defections increased, and so did Vietnam's losses. Heng Samrin's forces, albeit small, also suffered defeats and defections and faced a serious problem of recruiting.⁷

In response, in February, 1983, Hanoi called a meeting of the foreign ministers of the three Indochina nations and announced that all Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Kampuchea when the "Chinese threat" ended. Hanoi also announced the immediate withdrawal of some "volunteers."

CHINA'S PROPOSAL

China responded with a five-point plan: (1) Vietnam must unconditionally withdraw its forces; (2) the Soviet Union must stop supporting Vietnamese aggression; (3) after initial Vietnamese troop withdrawals, Chinese-Vietnamese normalization talks would begin; (4) the Kampuchean people would choose their system of government after the departure of Vietnamese troops; (5) China would join in a commitment not to interfere and would respect the independence, neutrality and non-aligned status of Kampuchea.⁸ It had been reported that these points were submitted to the Kremlin during Sino-

Soviet talks in October, 1982, and were not well received by Soviet negotiators.

Nevertheless, Chinese leaders were probably sincere in making the proposal. Beijing would probably be satisfied with a non-Communist, nonaligned Kampuchea as long as neither Hanoi nor Moscow had much influence on the government—at least for the time being.

As China's relations with the United States changed in the early 1970's, Beijing established new diplomatic goals vis-à-vis non-Communist Southeast Asia. Earlier, China condemned Thailand and the Philippines for joining the "American imperialist" Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO); it supported Communist insurgency movements in both countries and aided Communist revolution in Malaya during the period 1948–1960; it helped the Indonesian Communist party to try to overthrow the government (an attempt that failed due to an army-led counter coup) in 1965; it claimed that Singapore was a colony and a nation whose population (75 percent of it) was counted in China's census. But in the early 1970's, Beijing sought friendly ties with the ASEAN nations.

Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia responded by granting China diplomatic recognition. Indonesia and Singapore refused: Indonesia still recalled events of 1965 and was apprehensive of Beijing's connections with the Overseas Chinese population in Indonesia; Singapore wanted to discourage the impression that it was Chinese and said it would be the last of the ASEAN nations to establish formal diplomatic relations with China. Neither maintained formal relations with Taiwan (the Republic of China, Nationalist China), though both had informal ties of some significance with Taipei.

America's defeat in Vietnam in 1975, the dissolution of SEATO in 1977, and Hanoi's invasion of Kampuchea in 1978 all facilitated Beijing's friendly overtures toward the nations of ASEAN. Of the five, Thailand was the most responsive. Historically, Bangkok had a flexible foreign policy, and the threat of Vietnam's military power was immediate. In fact, as the "front-line" state in terms of resisting Vietnamese expansion, Thailand tried to help China build closer ties with the other member nations of ASEAN.

In reward for its help and in an effort to strengthen Thailand politically, economically and militarily, China discontinued its support for local Communist insurgency movements in Thailand—groups that were fairly autonomous in several parts of the country though they were primarily loyal to Beijing and were dependent on China for supplies and leadership. As a result, the Thai government successfully persuaded large numbers of Communist insurgents to leave the countryside, and defeated others by force.⁹

Beijing also promised to help Bangkok deal with Vietnamese military intimidation. Several times, including the spring of 1984, when Vietnamese troops crossed the border, China escalated tension or provoked fighting on

⁶"The Tanks Are Coming," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 24, 1983, p. 9.

⁷See for example, "Back on the Warpath," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 16, 1983, p. 10, and "Another Shot at Diplomacy," *Asiaweek*, April 27, 1984, pp. 7 and 8.

⁸*Beijing Review*, March, 1984.

⁹John McBeth, "Decline and Defection," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 10, 1982, p. 15; "Too Few Communists," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 16, 1984, p. 20.

the Sino-Vietnamese border. Thus Thai-Chinese military "arrangements" seemed meaningful to Hanoi as well as Bangkok.¹⁰

China has also been successful in improving relations with the Philippines. Manila needed to show some independence from the United States in the wake of the Vietnam debacle and the United States did not express any strong objection to improved Philippine-China ties. Beijing withdrew its support of Communist insurgents in the Philippine countryside, which generally followed Maoist dictums and had drawn moral as well as other kinds of support from China. Chinese leaders also approved of the United States bases in the Philippines in view of the Soviet military buildup at Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. China has even given economic aid to the Marcos government.¹¹

China's diplomatic actions toward Manila, however, do not relate directly to the conflict in Kampuchea. Rather, they should be seen as an effort to strengthen ASEAN and to facilitate better relations between China and the ASEAN members.

Beijing has been less successful in building better relations and winning support against Hanoi in the case of Malaysia. While Kuala Lumpur granted diplomatic recognition to China in the 1970's, Malaysia remains in many respects hostile toward China. It has complained loudly of Beijing's unwillingness to break its ties with the Communist insurgency in Malaysia and has protested its alleged propaganda and material support to them. Chinese leaders contend (and objective observers agree) that their level of support has been reduced and that if contacts with the Communists are broken completely they will simply turn to Moscow for aid, which will be even harder for Malaysia. The Malaysian government is not satisfied with this explanation.

Nor does the Malaysian government agree that Vietnam constitutes a greater threat to the region than China, either today or in the long run. Similarly, Malaysia is not convinced of the gravity of the Soviet threat. In July, when United States Secretary of State George Shultz visited Malaysia and several other nations in the region, Malaysian leaders told him that they opposed United States arms sales to China and believed that the Chinese threat to the region was greater than the Soviet threat. They also expressed opposition to the economic help the United States was giving to China, suggesting that an economically strong China was not in ASEAN's interest.¹²

In the case of Singapore, Beijing faces a standoffish government and leaders who do not want to get too close

to China because they want to avoid domestic problems related to ethnic relations and Chinese nationalism. Singapore studiously guards its independence and seeks to maintain a "balance" of forces in the region. Balancing does not mean more Chinese influence. On the other hand, Singapore opposes Hanoi's policies, which it sees as aggressive and which have created problems for other nations (i.e., creating refugees).

China's leaders choose to be cordial to Singapore and are pleased with its firm support of Thailand as the "front-line" state and its aid, including arms, for the anti-Vietnamese alliance in Kampuchea (though Singapore gives nothing to the Khmer Rouge).

Efforts to establish formal state-to-state contacts with Indonesia have proven fruitless. Indonesia takes Malaysia's view with regard to the relative seriousness of the Vietnamese, Soviet and Chinese threats to the region. It remains fearful of Chinese interference in Indonesia's domestic affairs and is suspicious of China's preference for a military as opposed to a diplomatic solution in Kampuchea.

In early 1984, Indonesia took the initiative to start negotiations with Hanoi with regard to Kampuchea. Though the efforts failed, Beijing was concerned that Indonesia might have established a precedent that might weaken ASEAN solidarity. Instead, China hopes to convince all the nations of ASEAN that negotiating with Hanoi is not wise and that military and economic pressure should be continued. However, Beijing has not been able to persuade the ASEAN nations that the Khmer Rouge would not return to power if and when the Vietnamese are forced out of Kampuchea; nor is ASEAN convinced that Pol Pot will not repeat his vicious policies of the 1975-1978 period, when he killed about 30 percent of the population.

The ASEAN nations want guarantees. This being unlikely, the ASEAN nations prefer negotiations to an "unconditional surrender" and disagree with Beijing with regard to a future role for the Heng Samrin regime.¹³ ASEAN sees Heng Samrin as a possible means of offsetting the Khmer Rouge; Beijing sees him simply as a Vietnamese puppet.

In spite of these differences, China and the nations of non-Communist Southeast Asia are more friendly and have more common policies than they have had for some time.

BEIJING AND THE OUTSIDE POWERS

During the Cultural Revolution in China (usually dated from 1965 to 1969), Beijing was at odds with all the

(Continued on page 434)

¹⁰Hanoi has recently accused Bangkok of collusion with China. See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 7, 1984, p. 16.

¹¹This was a loan for \$75 million given by Beijing to the Philippines following a visit by Imelda Marcos to China.

¹²"Shultz Consults with Asian and Pacific Leaders," *Asian Bulletin*, August, 1984, pp. 13 and 14.

¹³See Evelyn Colbert, "Stand Pat," *Foreign Policy*, Spring, 1984, p. 143.

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"The Vietnamese economy has embarked on a gradual recovery and there are few signs of domestic unrest. Vietnamese troops are firmly entrenched in Kampuchea, and the nation's borders are secure . . . It would be premature, however, to assume that Vietnam has weathered the storms of the immediate postwar period and is about to fulfill the exalted dreams expressed by party leaders at the moment of victory in 1975."

The Legacy of History in Vietnam

BY WILLIAM J. DUiker

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IN April, 1985, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the final conquest of the Saigon regime. There will be, of course, a justifiable sense of pride in the achievement of victory well earned. In some respects, however, this will be a somber occasion, for few of the bright hopes that arose on the morrow of victory have been fully realized. Party leaders in North Vietnam (then known as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, or DRV) undoubtedly anticipated that after a decade of peace, Vietnam would be a unified nation, secure in its borders and firmly embarked on the road toward a technologically advanced socialist society.

Reality has decreed otherwise. While the creation of a single unified Vietnamese state, from the Chinese border to the tip of the Ca Mau peninsula, was realized in 1976, spiritual unity has not been achieved. Abroad, Vietnam is surrounded by enemies; within, it suffers from a deep sense of malaise. At the same time, the dream of an advanced socialist society seems, if anything, to have moved further into the future than at the moment of victory a decade ago.

There is no little irony in the fact that the Communists, seemingly so successful in resolving the problems of war, have found it so difficult to resolve those of peace. On deeper reflection, however, it is perhaps not so surprising. The division between North and South Vietnam was decreed by the Geneva Conference in 1954, which led to the creation of two separate and sovereign states. When it tried to erase the division and to reunify these two states in a single Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Hanoi regime was, after all, attempting to reverse the tide of history. For while there was a clearly recognizable sense of Vietnamese identity and a commonality of culture among the people on both sides of the seventeenth parallel—an argument used effectively by Hanoi

¹North Vietnam, of course, was the traditional heartland of Vietnamese civilization, while the southern provinces were only assimilated in the seventeenth century and always retained a "frontier" character. For an interesting discussion by a Vietnamese scholar on the development of the rice culture in the South, see Phan Quang, "Pioneers in the Mekong Delta," *Vietnam Courier*, vol. 19, no. 9 (September, 1983), pp. 22–25.

throughout the war—North and South had been moving in different directions long before the formal separation of the two zones at Geneva.

The distinctive character of the two regions emerged during the precolonial period and took on clear expression during the colonial era.¹ Leaving North Vietnam relatively untouched, the French transformed the southern provinces into a colony and subsequently exposed it to a heavy dose of Western capitalist influence. Cultural differences were accentuated during the two decades of separation that followed the Geneva Conference. While the North embarked on the road to socialism under Communist rule, South Vietnam continued to follow a separate path and, under American sponsorship, continued to absorb Western cultural influence while its economy developed along capitalist lines. The Saigon regime was eventually defeated; but a substantial proportion of the population in the South was fundamentally hostile to the doctrines of Karl Marx.

The Communist leaders in Hanoi were not unaware of cultural and ideological differences, but in the hubris of victory they were confident that they could overcome these challenges and unite the country under one rule and one ideology. After some hesitation, the regime decided to forgo a stage of separate development for the South and move directly toward political reunification and socialist transformation. The first steps were deceptively easy. A unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established, with no visible signs of opposition, in July, 1976. A few months later, at the fourth congress of the Vietnamese Communist party (VCP) in December, party leaders announced that after a brief transition, the transformation to socialist forms of ownership in the South would begin in earnest before the end of the decade.

However, the regime miscalculated. In 1978, determined to end market instability in the Southern economy and to eliminate the cultural influence of the capitalist sector, Hanoi nationalized all industry and commerce above the family level and instituted the collectivization of the countryside. The results were disastrous. Industrial production plummeted, and a grain shortage forced the government to introduce food rationing. In 1979 the

party reversed its course and launched a series of reforms designed to reduce the rising level of social unrest and to promote economic growth.²

The new program had an immediate impact on the economy but brought with it the revival of capitalist forces which, in the minds of the hard-liners, threatened the stability of party rule in the South. In the early 1980's, the party leadership appeared deeply divided: pragmatists were convinced that the needs of economic growth must have absolute priority; ideologues feared that the continued existence of capitalist elements in the South would threaten the very foundations of the regime.

Like the crisis in domestic policy, Vietnam's foreign policy crisis had its roots in history. Hanoi's postwar foreign policy objectives could probably be summed up in three general propositions: to guarantee national security; to play an active and independent role in regional and global affairs; and to maintain good relations with other countries in the socialist camp, and particularly with the Soviet Union, its main sponsor and protector.³ Such objectives were not inherently unreasonable. But in the context of the moment and as interpreted by the regime, they were mutually irreconcilable.

The linchpin of Hanoi's strategy to guarantee its national security was the creation of a "special relationship" with neighboring Communist regimes in Laos and Kampuchea (Cambodia), both of which had come to power as a result of the collapse of the Saigon regime in 1975.⁴ Hanoi's objective, however, clashed with the goals of the highly nationalist Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea, which interpreted the "special relationship" as a disguised effort by Hanoi to reassert the domination that Vietnam had exerted over the Khmer people since it conquered the Mekong Delta in the seventeenth century. Hanoi also angered Chinese leaders, who hoped to restore traditional Chinese influence in the region.

By 1978, the Vietnamese were convinced that Beijing was behind the Kampucheans in an effort to weaken Vietnam and assume control over all Indochina. Overthrowing the Pol Pot regime, Hanoi set up its own pro-

²The reform program was first approved by the now famous sixth plenum of the Central Committee in 1979.

³For a discussion of Hanoi's foreign policy objectives, see Le Duan's speech before the National Assembly in June, 1976, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Asia and the Pacific*, vol. 4, no. 126 (June 29, 1976).

⁴Originally, Vietnamese party leaders had planned the formation of a so-called Indochinese Federation of the three countries, but when Lao and Khmer party members objected on the grounds of national autonomy, the concept was abandoned in the 1950's. It is not clear how the "special relationship" differs from its predecessor.

⁵A useful discussion of the origins of the coalition is located in Steve Heder's "KPNLF's Guerrilla Strategy Yields Mixed Results," in *Indochina Issues*, no. 45 (April, 1984).

⁶Carlyle Thayer, "Vietnam's New Pragmatism," in *Current History* (April, 1983), p. 158.

⁷For a discussion, see Nayan Chanda, "Vietnam's Economy: 'Bad, but Not Worse,'" in *Indochina Issues*, no. 41 (October, 1983).

Vietnamese government under Heng Samrin. That action, in turn, led to the punitive Chinese invasion in 1979 and the hostility of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries. When Hanoi refused to withdraw its troops from Kampuchea (now renamed the People's Republic of Kampuchea, or PRK) and called the situation there "irreversible," China and the ASEAN countries established a coalition between the Pol Pot forces and non-Communist elements to provide a credible alternative to the Hanoi-supported Phnom Penh regime.⁵

THE DOMESTIC CRISIS

By the spring of 1982, the regime faced intimidating challenges in both domestic and foreign affairs. The domestic crisis was apparently the main topic for discussion in a series of plenary sessions of the Central Committee leading up to the convening of the party's fifth national congress. The first to be held since December, 1976, it was originally scheduled to take place in the fall of 1981, but was postponed until the following spring, presumably to enable the party to work out policy differences within the leadership.⁶ The fifth congress was finally held in March, 1982, and resulted in a compromise between advocates of pragmatic economic policies and hard-liners anxious to speed up the pace of socialism. The congress reaffirmed the reformist policies adopted in 1979; at the same time it called for continuing efforts to complete the socialist transformation of industry and trade and the building of collectives in the South by the mid-1980's.

In the months following the congress, the regime held to its steady course of compromise. A series of liberalization measures permitted state enterprises to buy raw materials, set wages and bonuses, and sell their own produce. To encourage foreign trade, private export-import firms were set up under the regulation of the municipal government in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Sparked by the regime's relatively permissive attitude, the Vietnamese economy began to show signs of distinct improvement. In 1982, industrial growth increased at an annual rate of 12 percent, while food production, stimulated by an increase in the official purchasing price of rice and by incentives for private agricultural activity in collectives, reached 16 million tons, surpassing the official target for the first time since the end of the war.⁷

But the quickening pace of economic activity was also reflected in another statistic. The number of private manufacturers and petty traders was rapidly increasing and, according to one estimate, nearly 70 percent of the total volume of goods in circulation was being sold on the free market. The revival of the capitalist sector in the South provoked rising concern in Hanoi; many party leaders feared that the growth of such hostile forces would not only delay the process of socialist transformation, but would also threaten the very foundations of party rule during a key period of "struggle between two lines."

The most celebrated example of this attitude was an

article by General Tran Hai Phung on the overall security situation in South Vietnam, which appeared in the October, 1982, issue of the military journal *Tap Chi Quan Doi Nhan Dan* (People's Army Review). The general saw enemies everywhere—not only ex-soldiers and officials of the Saigon regime but also Catholics, Buddhist monks, overseas Chinese, and other “reactionaries under the cover of religion,” a total of over two million people. The general did not contend that all members of these groups actively opposed the regime, but he asserted that most of them were inherently hostile to the socialist system and that many had been subverted by Vietnam's enemies abroad and thus represented a serious security threat to the regime.⁸

The general may have exaggerated the situation, but there was no doubt that substantial numbers of southerners were disillusioned with the revolution and with the regime's policies, either because of the economic crisis or because of the repressive policies adopted by Hanoi. Reports of dissident activity among Catholics, Buddhist monks, the religious sects and the tribal minorities appeared regularly in the official press. Such signs of dissent added to the anxiety in Hanoi and undoubtedly strengthened the hands of party ideologues. In January, 1983, the party's official journal, *Tap Chi Cong San*, issued a blistering attack on the leadership in the South, which was charged not only with laxity in carrying out measures to reduce the influence of the private sector but also with deliberately ignoring directives from the party in Hanoi.⁹

During the next few months, the regime issued a number of new regulations to curb the power of the capitalist sector in the South. Taxes on the profits of manufacturing and commercial firms were increased, and stiff penalties were imposed to discourage evasion. The agricultural tax was increased from six to ten percent to reduce the growing disparity between rural and urban income.¹⁰ Such regulations may have had a mildly depressing effect on the capitalist sector, but they did not markedly reduce the

influence of private traders over the distribution and circulation of goods. According to official sources, there were nearly two million petty traders in Vietnam, and they controlled 60 percent of the country's retail trade.

In July, 1983, the fourth plenum of the VCP Central Committee intensified its attack on the slow pace of socialist transformation in the South. The problem, it declared bluntly, was not the general line of the party but its implementation. During the fall, a flurry of articles in the official press criticized unnamed “comrades” for laxity, “right-leaning,” “economism,” and a failure to observe the principle of democratic centralism. The attack clearly focused on the southern leadership, and there were rumors that top party figures in Ho Chi Minh City (or even Vo Van Kiet, a leading pragmatist in the Politburo in Hanoi) might be replaced.¹¹ The crisis passed in November when the Ho Chi Minh City party committee held a congress attended by leading party figures, including Secretary General Le Duan himself. The latter's address to the congress made it clear that the local party leadership had made “significant progress” in resolving its shortcomings and was on the road to transforming Ho Chi Minh City from one that “indulged in a luxurious and hedonistic life-style serving the rulers and exploiters into a productive city belonging to and serving the working people.”

Since the congress closed, the regime has attempted to maintain the careful balance between developmental and ideological goals that had originally been blocked out at the fifth party congress in 1982. Official statements continue to emphasize the need to reduce the influence of the private sector until it is finally eliminated. In practice, however, the regime has acted with caution, and some official spokesmen have flatly declared that the mixed economy will remain in effect for several years, until the state is prepared to assume a leading role in the distribution and circulation of goods.¹² In apparent recognition of this fact, the July, 1984, plenum apparently devoted the bulk of its attention to measures to improve the managerial skills of the state sector of the economy and of the government itself.¹³

In statistical terms, the current policy appears to be paying dividends. Industrial growth is running at about 10 percent. Agricultural production is also on the rise, although weather problems encountered early in 1984 have lowered the optimistic predictions of a record harvest. It is too early, however, to predict continued upward trends in the economy, which is still burdened with low productivity, primitive technology, an energy shortage and a massive foreign debt. For the moment, it can only be said that the crisis of the late 1970's, when the economy was in a tailspin and food consumption barely reached the level of subsistence, has been temporarily surmounted.¹⁴

An improvement in the overall economic situation will undoubtedly help to reduce but will probably not entirely eliminate the sense of malaise that currently afflicts Viet-

⁸For an English translation of the article, see Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS), no. 82,735.

⁹For an able recounting of the background of the issue, see Paul Quinn-Judge, “Calling the Tune,” in *Far Eastern Economic Review* (FEER), December 15, 1983, pp. 46–48.

¹⁰The decree is printed in an English-language version in *Vietnam Courier*, vol. 19, no. 5 (May, 1983), p. 13. The current regulations are designed to encourage both production and population control.

¹¹Two of the best-known officials in the South were Mai Chi Tho, chairman of the municipal people's committee for Ho Chi Minh City, and Nguyen Van Linh, the VCP's top representative in the South. Vo Van Kiet is chairman of the State Planning Commission and a Vice Premier of the SRV.

¹²See the article in *FEER*, May 24, 1984, reporting the interview of SRV planner Tran Phung.

¹³The plenum was reported in the bulletin of the SRV's permanent mission to the United Nations.

¹⁴A recent analysis of the state of the SRV economy is Murray Hiebert's “Contracts in Vietnam: More Rice, New Problems,” in *Indochina Issues*, July, 1984.

namese society, particularly in the South. Much of the current alienation appears to stem less from economic factors than from the determination of the regime to impose its revolutionary will on a resentful population. In a few cases, this resentment has led to open resistance—in sect areas in the Mekong Delta, among a few activist groups in the Catholic Church, and among the tribal minorities in the Central Highlands and in the provinces adjacent to the Chinese border. The regime has adopted a tough line against these groups and claims to have broken the back of all organized resistance.¹⁵

A more serious long-term problem, however, is the passive opposition of much of the South to the imposition of the socialist order. The regime has attempted to cope with this problem through the classic “divide and rule” tactics of the united front. State-run organizations have been established for Buddhists and Catholics to provide a vehicle for those who wish to support the regime and to isolate those elements considered hostile to its policies. Cadres involved in the collectivization program have been instructed to rely solely on voluntary measures to allay the anxieties of prosperous private farmers in the Mekong Delta.

In the last analysis, however, such measures have been only moderately successful, and the regime seems resigned to the fact that substantial numbers of southerners cannot be reconciled to the ideals of the Vietnamese revolution.¹⁶ This has not deterred party leaders from pressing forward with their plans to create a socialist society. Indeed, the regime seems convinced that long-term coexistence between the party rulers and the remaining capitalists in the South is impossible. If such is the case, the next few years will be of crucial importance, for the regime has made it clear that the whole country must adopt socialist forms of ownership “in the main” before the end of the decade.

The domestic crisis has been linked to Hanoi’s problems in foreign affairs in at least two respects. In the first place, the conflict in Indochina imposed a serious burden on the Vietnamese economy and encouraged Vietnam’s adversaries to feel that it could be pressured into a settlement in Kampuchea. Second, the conflict strengthened the conviction of party leaders that dissident elements in Vietnam were being aided and abetted by the regime’s foreign enemies. Thus they were less inclined to compromise with their enemies at home and abroad.

*Editor’s Note: See the article by David Chandler in this issue.

¹⁵The most visible open resistance to the regime was led by the tribal organization called the United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races (FULRO), originally established in the Central Highlands in 1964. Hanoi now claims that FULRO activities have been virtually eliminated.

¹⁶Tran Hai Phung’s article (*op. cit.*) is one indication of this attitude. Earlier, Deputy Foreign Minister (now Foreign Minister) Nguyen Co Thach had predicted that up to three million people might wish to leave the country. See *FEER*, August 24, 1979.

By 1982, both sides in the Indochina tangle were playing a waiting game. The ASEAN countries were hoping that the formation of a coalition (known as the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, or CGDK) would improve the image of the anti-Hanoi forces in Kampuchea both within the country and on the global scene.* While few expected the coalition’s armed forces to win a military victory over the powerful Vietnamese, there was cautious optimism that they could prove sufficiently troublesome to force Vietnam into a compromise.

For its part, Hanoi was undoubtedly convinced that it could outwait its adversaries. It thus settled into a familiar strategy that combined political, military and diplomatic struggle—a strategy that had served so effectively during the Vietnam War. Hanoi offered a number of minor concessions to lure the ASEAN countries to the conference table but would not compromise on matters of substance. The situation in Kampuchea, Vietnamese spokesmen tirelessly insisted, was “irreversible,” and Vietnam’s occupation forces would not be removed until the threat from China and the Khmer Rouge had been eliminated. In the meantime, stringent efforts were undertaken to strengthen the Heng Samrin regime in Phnom Penh and to improve the fighting capacity of Kampuchea’s armed forces, thus permitting Vietnam to remove its own occupation troops and present the world with a *fait accompli*.

In this war of nerves, Hanoi had many advantages. It had clear military superiority over its adversaries in Kampuchea, consistently demonstrated in clashes between Vietnamese units and the hostile coalition’s guerrilla forces, who were generally restricted in their operations to the area along the Thai border. At the same time, the Vietnamese were undoubtedly confident that growing differences over tactics and long-term objectives within ASEAN and between the ASEAN countries and China would eventually cause the breakup of the anti-Hanoi alliance. Vietnamese diplomatic tactics were thus directed, above all, at exploiting such differences.

This approach began to pay dividends in 1983, when a split began to appear in the anti-Vietnamese united front between those who, like China and Thailand, felt that Vietnam represented the main threat to the security of the region and should be forced to withdraw from Kampuchea, and those who, like Indonesia and Malaysia, regarded China as the major long-term danger to Southeast Asia and saw Vietnam as a potential counterweight against future Chinese expansion in the area.

This difference of opinion came to a head when Indo-
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"It is difficult to say how the stalemate between Vietnam and Kampuchea, on the one hand, and the Pol Pot coalition, the ASEAN states and the larger powers, on the other, can be resolved. No power is strong enough, or interested enough, to force Vietnamese troops out of Cambodia and to prevent them from returning. None of the factions in the coalition seems likely to gather enough support inside Cambodia to weaken or topple the government, or to convince the Vietnamese to cut their losses and return to Vietnam."

Kampuchea: End Game or Stalemate?

BY DAVID P. CHANDLER

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IN a sense, it is possible to describe Cambodia's situation, in terms of prospects and alignments, as a stalemate, much as it was described in 1982–1983.¹ At the same time, however, over the past year and a half or so, some major actors have shifted position slightly and changes in policy, performance and support are perceptible here and there. Because it is so difficult to gather data inside the country and because so many sources are biased in favor of one faction or another, assessments must be cautious and qualified. A good deal of evidence suggests, however, that pressures from the Vietnamese inside Cambodia (Kampuchea) are intensifying, and so are responses to these pressures, both inside the country and on the international scene.

Before discussing these changes, it is important to bring the players onto the board. In 1984, Cambodia has two "governments." One, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK: the Heng Samrin regime) holds office in Phnom Penh. The regime controls Cambodia's cities, countryside and provincial administration. It commands a 35,000-man army and allegedly has requested that approximately 150,000 Vietnamese troops be stationed in the country. The People's Republic levies taxes on real estate, on some commercial transactions and on some aspects of rice production.² It controls Cambodia's foreign trade and carries on foreign relations with more than 30 countries. Through its constitution and its National Assembly, the PRK claims to be the legitimate government of Cambodia; a claim made since it was placed in office with Vietnamese support in early 1979.

¹See David P. Chandler, "Strategies for Survival in Kampuchea," *Current History*, vol. 82 (1983), pp. 149–153.

²For details of PRK taxes, see Murray Hiebert, "Cambodia and Vietnam: Costs of the Alliance," *Indochina Issues*, no. 46 (May, 1984).

³See David P. Chandler, "Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea: When was the Birthday of the Party?" *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 56 (1983), pp. 288–300.

⁴Paul Quinn Judge, "Too Few Communists," *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)*, February 16, 1984. See also United States Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Asia and the Pacific Daily Report* (hereafter FBIS), November 28, 1983.

Political authority in Cambodia rests in the country's only political party, the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary party (KPRP). Its predecessor, bearing the same initials (with "Khmer" in place of "Kampuchean"), was founded in 1951 as an offshoot of the Vietnam-dominated Indo-China Communist party (ICP). The party stresses continuity from 1951 to its "third congress" in early 1979 by saying very little about what happened when the party was taken over by an anti-Vietnamese faction in the 1960's.³ By 1966, the party was styling itself the Communist party of Kampuchea (CPK); it pursued an autarkic line, culminating in the establishment of Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea (DK) in 1976. The party and the regime were both overthrown at the beginning of 1979 by a Vietnamese invasion (following several years of warfare), with the Vietnamese allegedly responding to an "invitation" to invade Cambodia issued by the reconstituted KPRP.

A recent report estimates party membership at less than a thousand people, roughly divided into three groups.⁴ One is made up of those who, like Heng Samrin himself, defected from the Communist party of Kampuchea between 1975 and 1978. An influential but smaller grouping (whose members occupy slightly less than half the seats on the KPRP Central Committee) consists of Cambodians like Prime Minister Chan Si, who sought refuge in Vietnam in 1954–1955, after the first Indochina War. Perhaps a thousand of these refugees returned to Cambodia in the early 1970's. Nearly all of them were executed shortly after their arrival under the orders of the secretary of the CPK Central Committee, Saloth Sar (later known as Pol Pot). The third group is drawn from people recruited into the party since 1979.

Although it controls the territory, people and institutions of Cambodia, the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea enjoys remarkably little international support; in fact, it has even less support than the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) itself, which is viewed by ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), the United States and China as a pariah. Nations that recognize the Heng Samrin regime diplomatically

are almost all closely allied with the Soviet Union. India and Albania are the most notable exceptions.

THE "SECOND GOVERNMENT"

Cambodia's second "government" is not a government at all. The so-called Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), cobbled together in September, 1982, controls a sliver of territory in north-western Cambodia, nestled against the Thai border, plus perhaps 300,000 Cambodians on both sides of the frontier who have chosen to live under its protection or have "voted with their feet" against Heng Samrin. The coalition is honored by the United Nations as the legitimate government of Cambodia, but less than a dozen nations, including Malaysia, have extended recognition in diplomatic form. One report from the DK zone states rather poignantly that villages in the zone have been given the names of Cambodian provinces, "for the sake of familiarity and to create the impression ... that Cambodia still exists."⁵

There are three groupings within the coalition. The largest in military terms is the Democratic Kampuchea faction, often referred to as the Khmer Rouge. This group is nominally under the leadership of Khieu Samphan, the vice president of the coalition in charge of foreign relations. Its approximately 45,000 troops however—equipped by China and given logistical backing by Bangkok—are commanded by Pol Pot, who led the CPK from 1962 until its "dissolution" at the end of 1981. It is probable that this dissolution was a fiction adopted for tactical reasons and that Pol Pot remains in command of the party and thus of the Khmer Rouge, despite his reluctance to talk with anyone unconnected with DK. Khieu Samphan has suggested as much by stating that he consults frequently with Pol Pot on political as well as military matters.⁶

Aside from Pol Pot's soldiers (and presumably their dependents), it is difficult to say how many Cambodians remain loyal to Democratic Kampuchea. It seems unlikely, however, that the "born again" Buddhism of some of its leaders or their recently discovered tolerance of capitalism have convinced many people who remember the regime in action. The record of Democratic Kampuchea, in fact, suggests that support for its return inside Cambodia is narrow or nonexistent.⁷

The remaining factions of the coalition are more accessible to the Western press and may well have larger followings inside Cambodia. The larger faction is the

Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), led by the Prime Minister of the coalition, a 74-year-old Cambodian statesman named Son Sann, who has managed to oppose or fall out with every regime that has held power in Phnom Penh since 1955. Because of his opposition to Democratic Kampuchea and to the Vietnamese, he has received substantial nonmilitary support from the ASEAN states, from the Cambodian community abroad, and from refugees nostalgic for presocialist Cambodia. It is impossible to gauge his popularity inside the country, although it is likely that he is better liked than other leaders in the coalition.

The president of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, presides over the smallest faction. Sihanouk has marched back and forth across Cambodian history since he was crowned King by the French in 1941. Twenty-nine years later, he reacted to the right-wing coup (led by his own Prime Minister) that deposed him by joining those forces that had been pledged for several years to removing him from power. After the civil war ended, he returned to Phnom Penh and resigned as chief of state; in 1976, he was confined by Democratic Kampuchea to his former residence in Phnom Penh where, he was later to admit, he ate well, perused French classics, and grew "rather fat."⁸ He turned against the Pol Pot regime a few months after that regime had sent him, in its dying moments, to plead its case at the United Nations, only rejoining his former captors in a marriage of convenience in 1982. Since then, the Prince has frequently threatened to resign and has made no secret of the contempt he feels for his colleagues in the coalition. His support is probably strongest among older Khmer, inside Cambodia and abroad, who remember his rule as prosperous and benign. Many others, however, find it difficult to forgive his long-term alliance with Pol Pot.

Troops commanded by the KPNLF and by Sihanouk's faction are believed to total between 10,000 and 15,000, although supporters of the coalition normally make higher claims. These troops receive small arms and training from Thailand and other ASEAN states, as well as "non-lethal" assistance from the United States. Rivalry and mistrust have kept the factions from conducting joint military operations, and there is some evidence that Democratic Kampuchean troops have purposely engaged and killed soldiers of the other factions in the coalition.⁹

Aside from political opportunism, the coalition is unified by the idea that all Cambodians despise the Vietnamese. On most other issues, the factions differ sharply. Son Sann's history of opposition to Sihanouk, whom he served as Prime Minister in the 1960's, is matched by Sihanouk's resentment of him, which dates from World War II, when Son Sann served briefly as his tutor. As for Democratic Kampuchea itself, it demonstrated in its years in power a total contempt for people like Sihanouk and Son Sann, murdering several of the Prince's children

⁵FBIS, July 27, 1983.

⁶FBIS, May 5, 1983.

⁷A crucial factor here is the validity or irrelevance of DK assertions that all Cambodians hate the Vietnamese to the point of backing any faction that opposes them. See Paul Quinn-Judge, "The Khmer Resistance: State of the Union," *Indochina Issues*, no. 40 (September, 1983).

⁸FBIS, January 22, 1979.

⁹See R. Tasker, "Stabbed in the Back," *FEER*, August 30, 1984.

and executing tens of thousands of Cambodians associated even tenuously with preceding "treasonous" regimes.

The death toll of the Pol Pot era will never be known. Estimates range from the faction's own "several thousand" to figures that hover between one and two million people.¹⁰ In August, 1983, the Heng Samrin regime estimated that 3,314,768 people died "horrible deaths" in Cambodia from 1975 to 1979.¹¹ The figures, given official standing by the National Assembly, were allegedly drawn from interviews with over a million survivors of the Pol Pot era.

It is easy to quibble with such estimates, particularly since they include over half a million people listed earlier as missing. Moreover, the Heng Samrin regime's decision to release them a month before United Nations discussions of Democratic Kampuchea can hardly have been fortuitous. Nonetheless, it is an unassailable fact that the wanton policies of Pol Pot and the hundreds of thousands of deaths that his policies caused were more responsible than the Vietnamese invasion for the collapse of Democratic Kampuchea in 1979 and for the enthusiasm with which, by and large, the Cambodians who watched the Vietnamese invasion (but not the Cambodian community abroad) welcomed the installation of a Vietnamese-controlled regime.

In a macabre fashion, the people who died under Pol Pot's regime provide the *raison d'être* for the Heng Samrin regime which, by charging "Pol Pot" with mindless genocide, has been able to personalize Democratic Kampuchea as a crackpot aberration and to play down the Leninist connections between the two regimes. Even after allowing for the opportunism of its claims and after noting that many important People's Republic officials occupied positions under Pol Pot, the general accuracy of the Heng Samrin regime's accusations, as far as the killings are concerned, is impossible to contradict, and so is the personal courage that was involved when individuals like Heng Samrin and his Foreign Minister, Hun Sen, chose to turn against Pol Pot in 1977 or 1978. Heng Samrin admitted the difficulties he faced, talking with a Swedish journalist in February, 1983:

There was no possibility of collecting people for a revolt. Pol Pot took full power over the whole country, and the Kampuchean people believed in Pol Pot. It was impossible to build up a resistance front, it was too early.¹²

¹⁰Coalition member Ieng Sary's estimate of "some thousands" (*quelques milliers*) came in an interview with Nayan Chanda (Nayan Chanda, personal communication). Higher estimates, around a million deaths, reflect research by Ben Kiernan, Stephen Heder, Michael Vickery and David Hawk.

¹¹FBIS, August 22, 1983. The figures do not include "foreigners" (not otherwise identified).

¹²FBIS, February 15, 1983.

¹³FBIS, July 27, 1984.

¹⁴FBIS, August 3, 1983.

¹⁵See Paul Quinn-Judge, "Khmer Equations," *FEER*, May 26, 1983; Hiebert, *op. cit.* and Patrice de Beer, *Le Monde*, June 5, 1983.

Memories of Democratic Kampuchea in action also undermine the credibility of assertions that its leaders have changed their minds and now favor land ownership patterns of the sort "that existed in Cambodia about 10 years ago"—that is, before the revolution, and all the slaughtering, began.¹³ Perhaps even harder for survivors to accept are Democratic Kampuchean assertions like this one:

[The DK shared] the conviction that parents do not kill their children, leaders who are Khmer in flesh and blood and are nationalistic and people-loving [*sic*] do not betray their nation and their people. In the past, Khmer have never killed Khmer. On the contrary, the Vietnamese have killed 2.5 million Kampucheans.¹⁴

VIETNAMESE CONTROL

How extensive is Vietnamese political control over the People's Republic? This critical question is difficult to answer. Some measure of political control exists. Without any at all, the frequency of servile, pro-Vietnamese effusions over Radio Phnom Penh, and the recurrent matching between PRK foreign policies and Vietnamese national interests would be statistically unlikely. With greater freedom of maneuver, the People's Republic might also be expected to accelerate the training and equipping of its own armed forces, a process that only began to intensify in 1984.

At the same time, it is impossible to verify charges by defectors from the People's Republic that ministries in Phnom Penh are under the day-to-day control of Vietnamese officials. Of course, the charge of complete Vietnamese hegemony suits the coalition, while the interests of the People's Republic are served by the notion of minimal guidance. Available evidence points to partial control but not, unfortunately, to any relaxation of Vietnamese interference in the past 18 months. The issue is complicated by the fact that in many ways caution is still the watchword of the regime, particularly in the countryside, so much of which remains in the hands of People's Republic officials who are not even members of the country's only political party, the KPRP.

In this regard, the delicate issue of Vietnamese immigration into Cambodia, as set forth in documents that have found their way into the hands of the coalition, seems to have been treated by the Vietnamese with much more sensitivity than a "genocidal" policy would require. Scattered evidence suggests that most of the Vietnamese civilians who have settled in Cambodia (perhaps 250,000 of them since 1979, compared to the 700,000 cited by the coalition, or the 56,000 admitted by the government) have come of their own accord, for economic reasons, rather than as part of a Vietnamese plan to overwhelm Cambodia, which supported half a million Vietnamese inhabitants in the 1960's.¹⁵

A related issue is the continuing presence of Vietnamese troops on Cambodian soil. After invading Cambodia with perhaps 200,000 troops, Vietnam has left about 150,000 soldiers in Cambodia five years later, after

several relatively small withdrawals. Their presence has been interpreted in several ways. To the coalition, they represent the vanguard of Vietnam's plan to engulf and enslave Cambodia. People's Republic spokesmen assert that the troops remain only at their invitation, acting as a shield to protect ordinary people from the "genocidal clique" along the border. To the ASEAN states, the United States, and China, the troops are long-range instruments of Soviet policy and threaten the stability of Southeast Asia.

A more convincing explanation, seldom officially advanced by parties to the dispute, is that the troops are in Cambodia on behalf of Vietnamese national interests. As far as Cambodia is concerned, these interests are apparently to control Cambodian politics to prevent the possibility that Vietnam's enemies might install a non-socialist government in Phnom Penh. After all, China and the United States would like Cambodia to act as a buffer zone between Thailand and Vietnam. By being nonsocialist, Cambodia could then informally destabilize Vietnam, particularly in the south, at little cost to the great powers.

To allow the Vietnamese to have national interests of their own (as opposed to voracious impulses, flashes of impudence and servility to the Soviet Union) has been particularly difficult for China and the United States. Ironically, this incapacity to perceive national interests is shared by Vietnam itself as far as Laos and Cambodia are concerned. As so often happens in Cambodian history, the interests of ordinary Khmer are seldom given much weight. The people are clearly of little concern to bureaucrats who refer to Pol Pot's murderous army as a "bargaining chip" or promote the notion that friendliness between Cambodia and Vietnam has been the *leitmotif* of Cambodia's "two thousand years" of history.

The slanging match between the People's Republic and the coalition is complicated by the fact, as Elizabeth Becker has pointed out,¹⁶ that the major charges leveled by both sides are true. On the one hand, military power in the coalition rests in the hands of Pol Pot and other unrepentant leaders of Democratic Kampuchea. On the other hand, the People's Republic is largely, if not entirely, the creature of a foreign power. The return of Democratic Kampuchea, as the current government's propaganda suggests, is feared by most Cambodians. At the same time, however the People's Republic is seen—as a

satellite, a protectorate, or a junior partner of Vietnam—it is difficult to speak of it as the government of an independent state.

Neither side, of course, admits the truth of the other's accusations. Instead, the People's Republic insists that the Vietnamese are in Cambodia to practice "international solidarity" with its people; the coalition claims that Pol Pot's troops are the only forces capable of taking on the "genocidal" Vietnamese.

Each side is talking past the other. So far at least, it is difficult to perceive any issue that is substantially negotiable between China, the United States and ASEAN, on the one hand, and Vietnam on the other. Since Democratic Kampuchea is unable to change its spots and the Chinese are unwilling to lessen their support, Vietnam claims to be unable to set Cambodia free—a process difficult to bring into line, in any case, with Vietnam's geopolitical interests. And so it seems likely that large numbers of Vietnamese troops will be garrisoned on Cambodian soil for the foreseeable future; after all, 50,000 Vietnamese troops are still stationed in more closely aligned Laos, nearly a decade after liberation.

It also seems likely that as long as Vietnamese troops are in Cambodia, the People's Republic will continue to receive Vietnamese guidance on matters of diplomacy, defense, and party policies. Such a prospect does not rule out continuing or even increasing freedom of maneuver in fields like planning, local government, tax collection and education—to name only four—particularly when the approximately 2,000 Cambodians now receiving technical and tertiary training overseas return home to take up positions in the People's Republic. Thus inside Cambodia, the prospect for the rest of the 1980's is neither for an independent Cambodia nor for a country exterminated by Vietnam. The fact that Cambodians will continue to kill each other (as well as occasional Vietnamese) apparently does not distress the bureaucrats of those countries that see Cambodia primarily as a "problem" rather than as a nation or as a group of people.

Ironically, the Vietnamese rationale for remaining in Cambodia is similar to the rationale that kept France "protecting" Cambodia (and Vietnam) for nearly 100 years. Taking a longer view, this rationale also resembles the one offered by Vietnamese "advisers" in Cambodia in the 1830's and Chinese officials in Vietnam itself 1,000 years earlier.¹⁷

There are disturbing indications, drawn particularly from official statements emanating from the Heng Samrin government, that Vietnamese interference is becoming shriller and more systematic. There are several reasons for this, but it is hard to discern the more decisive ones. The military history of 1983–1984 is not especially helpful, for the fighting that took place, despite some vicious battles, amounted to a standoff; both sides remain in place to fight in 1985. Politically, inside Cambodia support for the People's Republic may be fading somewhat as the regime begins to govern the country (after

¹⁶Elizabeth Becker, "Kampuchea in 1983," *Asian Survey*, vol. 24 (1984), pp. 37–48. Several points raised in this article, including the fact that many PRK officials had held posts under DK, are restated in William Shawcross, "The Burial of Cambodia," *The New York Review of Books*, May 10, 1984.

¹⁷See David P. Chandler, *A History of Cambodia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983), chapter seven. This interlude was emphasized in the DK "Black Paper" of 1979, but was played down in the "White Paper" published by the PRK in 1983, which emphasizes Thai depredations. On the Chinese period, see Keith W. Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), *passim*.

several years of presiding over it) by collecting taxes, putting criminals in jail, conscripting soldiers, and so on. In a time of military stalemate and mounting pressures, it is possible, particularly in northwestern Cambodia, that coalition propaganda has gathered some support, particularly from Cambodians with relatives in refugee camps or those who are exhausted by the prospect of continuing to fight the civil war that has ravaged the country and killed perhaps two million people since the 1960's.

With these considerations in mind, the shrillness of government statements might also be traced to war-weariness on the part of the Vietnamese themselves. Vietnamese efforts to accelerate the training and equipping of PRK forces suggest that perhaps they are finding their occupation of Cambodia open-ended, costly, exhausting and nonproductive, much as their forebears found it in the 1830's. How Vietnam's patrons in the Soviet Union view the commitment and its costs is not yet clear.

These possible explanations for the nervous, subservient tone of recent government statements are supported, sketchily, by bits of evidence provided by visitors to Cambodia in recent months, who point to such things as the persisting curfew in Phnom Penh, limitations placed on foreign travelers, the failure of the regime to open the Angkor area to tourists, and stoppages of the rail service between Phnom Penh and Battambang as symptomatic of the government's security problems.¹⁸ In addition, of course, it is possible that imperceptible factors (including disputes in Vietnam or pressure on Vietnam from the Soviet Union) may also be important.

In sum, a gradually deteriorating security situation, the unknown allegiance of Cambodians in the countryside, and long-term exigencies of Vietnamese policies in Indochina have combined to encourage the Vietnamese to tighten their grip on Cambodia. This tightening can be inferred by studying People's Republic pronouncements that have to do with history, Vietnam, and the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary party. To its citizens, the regime must project the image that it is an independent state. At the same time, its leaders are forced (or find it necessary) to declare repeatedly their subservience to Vietnam.

CAMBODIAN "HISTORY"

Government discussions of Cambodian history claim that it began in earnest on January 7, 1979, when the Heng Samrin regime took office in Phnom Penh. According to Foreign Minister Hun Sen, this was

the first time the Kampuchean fatherland knew true independence, and it was the first time that the Kampuchean people won the right to be masters of their own destiny.¹⁹

Sentences like this are reminiscent of those in the Pol Pot era, which traced the beginnings of Cambodian his-

tory and self-reliance to the capture of Phnom Penh by Pol Pot forces on April 17, 1975. For the People's Republic, Cambodia's identity as a nation is linked to the realization—certainly a long time coming, if Cambodia's *histoire evenementielle* is to be believed—that its destiny is linked inextricably with Vietnam's and, to a lesser extent, with that of Laos. Both the People's Republic and Pol Pot statements see Cambodia's history before the 1970's, in any case, as a long enslavement. To Pol Pot spokesmen, national liberation was linked to Cambodian self-reliance; in the People's Republic, liberation involves accepting the fraternal guidance of Vietnam. In either case, unsurprisingly, Cambodian history has been made to serve the interests of its leaders, and those who patronize them.

In his speech on Cambodia's national day (January 7, 1984), in the presence of Vietnam's Vice President Truong Chinh and high-ranking Lao and Soviet officials, for example, Heng Samrin described Cambodia's long history, unintentionally perhaps, in terms of its inability to handle its own affairs. Noting that the architectural ruins at Angkor were "brilliant proof of the wonderful talent and creative strength of Kampuchean workers, intellectuals and artists," he added that the work of erecting them had been "imposed" on the people, and thus had become a "source of mourning." The "disintegration" of Angkor, in his view, was accelerated by the Thai, who worked to accomplish this objective for "six hundred years." In the nineteenth century, the French "enslaved" the people. With independence, first Sihanouk and then Pol Pot betrayed Cambodia's promise. In his peroration, Heng Samrin declared that

a historic lesson people have learned over the past ten years at the cost of blood and tears is that separation from Vietnam and Laos means death, while unity with Vietnam and Laos means victory.

Frequent government statements refer to the fact that in 1979 the Vietnamese rescued Cambodia "from genocide." No documents explain why they waited as long as they did, but it is unlikely that Vietnam believes that it owes Cambodia detailed explanations. Instead, the alliance between Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos has become a "law of evolution" and therefore immutable.

In government statements, Vietnam is never criticized on any grounds, and its enemies are given correspondingly little benefit of the doubt. Similarly, as far as the KPRP is concerned, what seems to be uppermost in the minds of People's Republic spokesmen is the fact that

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¹⁸Michael Richardson, "New Life in Phnom Penh," *The Age* (Victoria), February 22, 1984, and Hiebert, *op. cit.*

¹⁹FBIS, January 9, 1984.

"Despite difficulties with its United States ally, the Prem government believes that the major challenge to Thai security relates to profound social change as urbanization, industrialization and political participation are forced on a traditional culture."

Political Forces in Thailand

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IN the late twentieth century, the Thai people have searched for a balance between their reverence for tradition and their desire for modernization. And in 1983–1984, Thailand's leaders continued to move toward modern ends while sustaining Thai tradition. The economy continued its vibrant growth at a rate far higher than that of other developing nations, while the government conducted elections and overcame crises that threatened its stability.¹

The issues affecting contemporary Thai society can be analyzed in terms of the kingdom's principal groups and institutions, including the peasantry, the insurgents, business leaders, bureaucrats, politicians, military officers and royalty. Thailand's allies also play an important role.

To speak of the peasantry in Thailand is to generalize about a heterogeneous group that constitutes some 75 percent of the population. The lives of the peasants have changed in response to changes in the agricultural sector as new crops—maize, kenaf, cotton, tobacco, fruits and coconuts—have been introduced. In the decade 1960 to 1970, per capita income increased from \$100 to \$160, and per capita income in 1984 was \$800. This growth rate (5.8 percent in 1983) is exceptionally high compared with most developing nations.

Clearly, any analysis of Thai politics must assess the role of those who constitute the great majority of the population. The peasantry has long been noted for its political passivity and isolation from the central sources of power; its subordinate position vis-à-vis urbanites, officials, landlords and moneylenders partially explains the peasants' reluctance to become involved. In the public realm they have often been exploited.

In the past two decades, great change has occurred in the countryside, suggesting that peasant passivity is no longer a characteristic of Thai politics. Rapid population growth, scarcity of cultivable land, and the advent of a cash economy have led to increased land tenancy, membership in farmers groups, more interaction between peasants and officials, greater mobility, and looser patron-client ties.

The strongest evidence of the politicization of the Thai

peasantry came during the 1973–1976 "Democratic Period," when a student revolt resulted in the overthrow of the military government and its replacement by civilian authorities. After October, 1973, the peasantry became more involved in politics than ever before. With the support of student activists, but mostly on their own, farmers began to organize to express their grievances against landlords, moneylenders, and corrupt officials who for generations had exploited them.

At present, unprecedented pressures on the Thai peasantry have caused the tradition of political passivity to be questioned and set aside. A 1980 World Bank report indicates that fully one-third of rural Thais live below the poverty level. Moreover, the typical farmer faces problems that make his existence as a farmer increasingly precarious.

Inflation was running between 12 and 20 percent until 1982, when it was reduced to about 5 percent. Thus many farmers have found themselves over their heads in debt and have been forced to give up their land. Credit is still difficult to obtain in rural areas. Banks continue to give priority to their urban customers, and credit that is available is provided at high interest rates by middlemen who also control marketing, transportation and storage in rural areas. Lack of irrigation and flood-control facilities, as well as ecological disasters from deforestation, have intensified droughts and floods that have ravaged farmlands. The result is continuing low agricultural productivity.

During the 1973–1976 Democratic Period the expectations of peasants rose, only to be lowered again with the military's return to power. Nevertheless, the Democratic Period resulted in the temporary mobilization of rural people, who attempted to organize and make demands on government authorities. Thus the "passive peasant"—for a moment in time—became an activist. However, subsequent Thai governments did not make reforms in the rural sector that would meet peasant grievances. The resulting tension between a conservative polity and a changing peasantry is thus a crucial aspect of the traditional-modern dichotomy in contemporary Thailand.

THE INSURGENTS

Although communism in Thailand can be traced to

¹The following paragraphs are adapted from the author's chapter on Thailand in Diane K. Mauzy, ed., *Politics in the ASEAN States* (Singapore, forthcoming, 1984).

the founding of the Chinese Communist party of Thailand (CCPT) in the late 1920's, armed Communist insurgency did not flourish until 1965. Using a Marxist model (control the countryside through armed struggle and surround the cities) and supported by the People's Republic of China, the predominantly Sino-Thai Communist party of Thailand (CPT) launched an insurgency in south, north and northeast Thailand, where poverty was endemic and ethnic minorities dominated.

At present, the CPT does not offer Thailand a viable leadership alternative. Its influence is significantly reduced by the perception that the party is led by China, its lack of adequate logistical support, its estrangement from Vietnam, the defections of its Thai intellectual leaders, ideological discord, and the sophisticated counterinsurgency of the Thai government. A resurgent Thai-led, urban-oriented CPT is not impossible, but it will depend largely on the success or failure of the Thai government in resolving the wrenching economic problems that no Thai administration has yet faced adequately.

BUSINESS LEADERS

The Chinese community is Thailand's economic elite. Financial control is exercised through interlocking directorates and kinship ties. In association with military and bureaucratic leaders, this business class has the capacity to fashion the Thai economy in a way that contributes to the perpetuation of established government elites. The symbiotic relationship between Sino-Thai business elites and military-bureaucratic forces has led to policies (banned strikes, limited wage increases, levied preferential taxation) that are of mutual self-interest. Awareness of the power of the Chinese bourgeoisie has been increasing, especially since the April, 1981, attempted coup, when Young Turks announced they would move against "monopolies controlling the Thai economy." Banking interests appeared to be their primary target.

The majority Thais are ambivalent about the Chinese. On the one hand, the Chinese have been assimilated: they have taken Thai names, sent their children to Thai public schools, moved into nonbusiness professions, and intermarried. Nevertheless, they are perceived by the Thais to retain a separate or double identity; they have a loyalty to the Chinese homeland; they are exclusivist in their business pursuits; they look down on the majority Thais; and they control the economy. This Thai ambivalence causes concern among Chinese and Thai alike who realize that the future of the kingdom, politically and economically, is intertwined with the destinies of both groups.

BUREAUCRATS, POLITICIANS, AND THE MILITARY

In Thailand, politics at the national level has always been conducted among a small group within traditional government structures. For the most part, Thailand is a bureaucratic polity—that is, a society in which the arena of politics lies within the bureaucracy—and there are only a few influential extrabureaucratic institutions. This

is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, the bureaucracy is the bedrock of Thai stability; on the other hand, the same bureaucracy must provide change and growth.

The elite in Thai politics consists of top-level military leaders, a few civilian politicians and the members of the royal family. These forces have much in common: they come from privileged families; they are graduates of the leading universities or military academies; and they are urban. Moreover, they tend to share the traditional values of a status-oriented society.

Since 1932, the kingdom has been governed by senior ministers and military generals. In the last 52 years, civilian rule has been experienced for only 8 years; in the other 44 years, military leaders have held the major positions of power: Prime Minister, minister of defense, and minister of interior. More than half of all Cabinet officers since 1932 have at the same time been military officers.

The military has dominated national-level Thai politics for many reasons. First, it has repressed or coopted potential rivals for power. Opposition groups that protest government policies are branded "Communist" or "subversive." In October, 1976, for example, after the military coup d'état, student, labor and peasant leaders were arrested. Leaders among the intellectual community have been given consulting positions to discourage their opposition.

The military's dominance also stems from the fact that few forces challenge its authority. Short-lived political parties tend to be single-candidate oriented. Business groups are controlled by ethnic Chinese and hence are outside the central positions of power. The citizenry is largely rural, isolated and passive in terms of national issues. The royal family is "above politics," and civilian bureaucrats and politicians have developed a mutually beneficial relationship with the military. In short, the military has filled the vacuum formed by the absence of extrabureaucratic forces.

Retired General Prem Tinsulanond has been Prime Minister since February, 1980, when he succeeded General Kriangsak Chamanand, Thailand's Prime Minister from 1977 to 1980. Prem's tenure as Prime Minister has been shaky, but he has managed to hold power for over four years. His impeccable reputation, his moderate image, his support from key military generals, his ability to mobilize civilian politicians into a broad-based parliamentary majority, and his strong backing from the King have strengthened Prem's position.

Despite these assets, Prem faces severe problems. His indecisiveness and his precarious position vis-à-vis other military factions have made it difficult for him to control the government. By March, 1981, the two major parties of Prem's coalition, Social Action and Chart Thai, had clashed over a series of economic issues, and these differences caused the collapse of his coalition. Prime Minister Prem then announced a new coalition, including military

leaders, technocrats, and leaders of five political parties. Of the 40 Cabinet members, 18 were nonpartisan technocrats without a political base. The new government was more conservative, reflecting pressure from the military to decelerate reformist policies.

The new government, known as Prem II, did not have an opportunity to clarify its program before an April 1, 1981, coup attempt raised serious questions about political stability. The coup, Thailand's fourteenth since 1932, began when a group of army officers established a Revolutionary Council, seized key positions in Bangkok and, for a short time, controlled radio communications. The attempt was led by regimental commanders with the rank of colonel, who were known as Young Turks. Their Revolutionary Council collapsed in two days, after General Prem mobilized his army supporters and the royal family announced its support for the Prem government. Under air force cover, pro-Prem troops converged on Bangkok on April 2 and retook the capital, with no resistance from the rebels.

Prem's position was strengthened by the April 18, 1983, elections, which were called after a controversy over constitutional provisions between military leaders and civilian politicians. Army Commander-in-Chief General Arthit Kamalang-ek and his senior military advisers had pushed for the passage of three constitutional amendments making permanent the transitory clauses of the 1978 constitution. These amendments would (1) allow military officers and civil servants to hold ministerial posts; (2) retain the prerogatives of the army-dominated Senate; and (3) keep the multiconstituency, individual-candidacy system of voting—instead of a single-constituency system, with voters casting their ballots for a slate of candidates from each party. Unless the amendments were approved, these transitory clauses were to expire April 21, 1983.

In a surprising and unprecedented vote, complicated by last-minute reversals and the resignation from the senate of military supporters, the Parliament voted against the army high command's wishes by rejecting the amendments. The vote jeopardized the political future of key army figures, undermined the army's control over the Senate (as well as the entire Parliament), and strengthened the large civilian-based political parties like the Democrats and Social Action party (SAP), traditionally the bane of the military.

In an astute move to counter plans for a military coup, Prime Minister Prem called for an April 18 election, three days before the transitory clauses lapsed. Despite this small victory, the army (and Commander-in-Chief Arthit in particular) suffered a defeat that at least temporarily blocked the military's desire to institutionalize its involvement in Thai politics.

The Ministry of Interior, with only one month to organize, carried out a trouble-free, noncorrupt election,

with 53 percent of the population voting. Despite the multiconstituency system, the Democrats, Chart Thai, and SAP parties strengthened their positions, winning 56, 73, and 92 seats respectively in the 323-seat lower house of the National Assembly. After negotiating with the major parties, General Prem announced the formation of a majority coalition made up of the SAP, Democrat, Prachakorn Thai, and National Democracy parties. The Chart Thai became the principal opposition party.

The 1983 election continued the trend of the 1979 elections, when far-left and far-right parties were rejected in favor of moderate parties. More voters appeared to vote along party lines than they had in the past, when famous personalities were chosen regardless of party affiliation. Thus the major parties have become institutionalized; in the past, most parties disappeared soon after the elections.

Parliaments and political parties are regarded as disruptive and threatening to the generals and some bureaucrats, the traditional power holders. Because they do not fit the pattern of highly centralized rule, members of Parliament are often treated with contempt. Kukrit Pramoj, Thailand's former Prime Minister and most famous civilian politician, stated (in March, 1984) that Thailand's elected representatives are "shameless and have no concept of sin":

From the very first moment they enter the political arena, their only thought is what they will have, what position they will hold and how much money they will earn.²

General Arthit agreed that Thai governments are weak because members of Parliament are chosen by people who do not understand democracy. Mindful of the army's role, he contended that understanding democracy is a key to national security.³

Prem did not join a political party nor was he a candidate for the National Assembly. He was chosen Prime Minister largely because he was acceptable both to the military and to liberal and conservative politicians. After the elections he resigned, then "bowed" to the entreaties of party leaders who viewed him as the only hope for a stable regime. Although Prem retained his positions as Prime Minister and defense minister, he allocated the other portfolios in accordance with the parties' strength in Parliament.

As a retired general, Prem no longer held a military position. The most important military leader in Thailand is General Arthit, who holds the positions of army commander-in-chief, supreme commander of the armed forces, chief of the Bangkok peacekeeping force, director of the internal security operations command, and chairman of Thailand's telephone organization. Arthit advanced rapidly in the army hierarchy after April, 1981, when, as a low-ranking general, he provided essential support to Prime Minister Prem's government against the attempted coup.

In 1984, Arthit overcame his defeat on the constitution-

²*Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 22, 1984, p. 16.

³*Ibid.*

al amendment issue and reasserted his military position and status as Prem's most likely successor. His image as a "strongman," with outspoken views on political, economic and military matters, is in striking contrast to the image of Prem as a soft-spoken conciliator. Arthit has strengthened his position by effecting a reconciliation with the Young Turk officers he once opposed. This turnabout reflects the colonels' view that only Arthit can provide the leadership the nation needs.

Arthit's military power rests also on the loyalty of the First Army Region, the traditional power center of the army. His major supporter is Major General Pichit Kulavanich, First Division commander and deputy army chief. In August, 1984, Pichit publicly called for a two-year extension of Arthit's military career.

Arthit must retire in 1985, according to the constitutional provision for retirement at age 59. As defense minister, Prem will make the final decision, although at this time few believe he could refuse the extension request. At the end of Prem's four-year term in 1987, Arthit may be ready to retire and assume the position of Prime Minister. This plan for the turnover of government to Arthit might well provide Prem with two more years of stability and with less fear of a coup.

In 1984, Arthit continued to express unstinting support for his mentor and civilian superior. Nevertheless, in September, 1984, when Prime Minister Prem became ill and left for the United States for medical treatment, coup rumors surfaced once again. General Arthit's supporters challenged the National Assembly to revise the constitution to allow active military officers to hold government posts. A crisis was averted when the legislature voted to postpone a decision. Civilian politicians viewed Arthit's challenge as a sign that he wanted to make an early bid for the position of Prime Minister while Prem was ill. The legislature's refusal to accede to the army's wishes is an indication that it does not want to end the nation's progress toward civilian democratic rule.

Arthit's supporters also include Lieutenant General Chaovalit Yongchaiyut, army deputy chief of staff, who is reputed to be brilliant and influential. Chaovalit is the architect of the government's 1980 Order 66/2523, which emphasizes the need to adopt a political strategy in addition to military suppression in dealing with the Communist insurgency. Order 66/2523 has also been used to support the military's role in economic and social development programs, and civilian politicians see the document as an explanation of continued military involvement in all aspects of the political life of the nation.

ROYALTY

Since the Sukhothai era seven centuries ago, the monarchy has played a direct and a symbolic role in Thailand. And since 1932, when a group of plotters transformed the absolute monarchy into a constitutional monarchy, the symbolic role has been most important. The King, who symbolizes Thailand's unity and con-

tinuity, is one of the most revered monarchs in the world.

The present monarch, King Phumipol Adunyadej, ninth King of the 202-year-old Chakri dynasty, is the younger brother of King Ananda (Rama VIII) and grandson of the great King Chulalongkorn (Rama V). His wife, Queen Sirikit, has presented the King with four children, including his only son, Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn. Having ascended the throne in 1946 and now only 56 years old, King Phumipol seems destined for a long, influential reign.

Traditionally, the King is above politics; but King Phumipol has chosen to assert his influence on a number of occasions. He has helped improve the wretched conditions of Thailand's many hill tribes; he has traveled abroad to promote the nation's interests; and he has participated in development projects throughout the country. The October, 1973, coup, which ousted the military, enhanced his image, for the King had worked hard to end the bloodshed and to send Generals Prapat and Thanom into exile. Without the King's support, military opposition to the change in government withered, and the King personally selected civilian Prime Minister Sanya Thamasak, a royalist and conservative.

Three years after the ouster of the military, King Phumipol again intervened in politics, this time on the side of the generals. The period of civilian democratic rule (1973–1976) had not resolved Thailand's many sociopolitical-economic problems; so the generals again united and, with the King's blessing, reasserted their power. This dismayed a number of liberal politicians and intellectuals who felt that the King's alignment with the military sullied his image. Moreover, his choice of the reactionary Thanin Kravichian as Prime Minister angered a number of Thais.

Phumipol's involvement in politics reached its peak in 1981, when he supported Prime Minister Prem against the group of dissident colonels who staged their short-lived coup d'état. The refusal of many army personnel to support the coup, in keeping with the wishes of the King, was an indication of his continuing influence.

The royal family is protected from criticism by *lèse majesté* laws that make it a crime to disparage the monarchy; nevertheless, there is a great deal of gossip about the royal family and the intensity of the gossip has increased in the last decade. When the King promoted his daughter, Princess Sirindhorn, to the rank of Maha Chakri, this promotion plus a 1978 change in the succession law allowing a female to reign were interpreted as

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"Clearly, the new leader or leaders of Burma face pressing issues. After 22 years of Ne Win's leadership, Burma is still plagued by some of the problems Ne Win inherited from his predecessors as well as those he created. If his successors try to continue along the path he has laid out, economic decline and internal warfare will continue to plague the nation."

Burma: A Time for Decision

BY JOSEF SILVERSTEIN

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BURMA is suffering an aging leadership, a stagnating economy and a debilitating endless war against ethnic and political insurgents. Thus the time is coming when those in charge will have to make important and probably direction-changing decisions if the nation is to avoid political confusion, economic decline and national disintegration.

Twenty-two years ago, a small group of military leaders seized power and directed the nation down an uncharted road to socialism. To accomplish their aims, the soldiers-in-power first eliminated all legitimate opposition by jailing some of the elected and popular leaders and driving others into exile. The parties that had contested for power between independence and the coup withered and died as new rulers created their own party—the Burma Socialist Program party (BSPP)—and made it the only legal party.

In place of the constitutional system, the military rulers governed by decree for nearly a decade and at its close transformed themselves from a Revolutionary Council into the formal government of Burma. In 1972, with many of the original leaders retired from active duty but still serving in government and as leaders in the party, the BSPP drew up a new constitution that legitimized the changes of the preceding decade and erected a constitutional dictatorship with the party as the exclusive ruler of Burma.¹

As economic planners and technicians, the military leaders proceeded by "trial and error," attempting to follow their own vague and imprecise ideology entitled *The Burmese Way to Socialism*. Within a year of seizing power they embarked on the rapid nationalization of the few industries and commercial enterprises still in existence. Trying not to revolutionize the peasantry, the coup leaders reaffirmed that the crops belonged to the farmers although the state was the ultimate owner of all the lands; under the new system, farmers were expected to sell their produce to the state, which assumed the role of exclusive exporter. In addition, the soldiers-in-power hastily and

with disastrous results took over the manufacture, purchase and distribution of consumer goods and other products. Domestic production fell; distribution broke down; and the economy declined.

In this situation, a parallel black market economy arose to supply the needs and wants of the people. Initially, the military sought to stamp out its economic rival, but gradually the government came to realize that it could not fill the gap and the black market became a permanent fixture in Burmese economic life. Toward the end of the 1970's, because of the introduction of new "miracle" strains of paddy and new agricultural technology, rice production rose, exports increased and, with improvement in other areas of the economy, the nation seemed at last to be achieving steady growth at between six and seven percent per year.²

For the past two decades, the military has tried to bring about important social changes in conformity with its ideology. The military rulers believed that foreign control of the economy had not been stamped out by their predecessors. For this reason, in addition to nationalizing Burma's enterprises, in 1964 they took measures that broke the economic power of Indian shopkeepers, traders and other businessmen. This action won widespread popular support, even though it contributed to a breakdown in the sale and distribution of goods and services. In their effort to win national backing and to silence opposition, the military rulers used harsh repressive measures against the university students, Buddhist monks and political leaders who opposed them. While student dissent continued to erupt sporadically for two decades, it had only a limited effect on the men in power. It took the government longer to bring the Buddhist monks and their organizations under control; but in 1980, the government won the support of a majority of the clergy for its policy of requiring monks to carry identification cards, register, and unite their organizations in a federation. Thereafter, the government was able to exercise some control over the clergy through a newly created Department of Religious Affairs.

Against these successes, it must be remembered that the government failed to end the armed resistance of several ethnic minorities and the Burma Communist party (BCP); beyond pushing the insurgents to the border areas, the endless war keeps a relatively large army in

¹For a fuller discussion see Josef Silverstein, *Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), chapter 4.

²See David I. Steinberg, *Burma's Road Toward Development* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981) for an extended discussion.

the field and drains precious human and material resources in wars along the eastern and northern borders.³

In foreign policy, the military rulers have continued the broad outlines of policy initiated by their civilian predecessors. They believe fervently in nonalignment and neutralism and seized power believing that the government they displaced had allowed the nation to move too close to the West. For this reason, they tried to redress the balance by asking the Soviet Union, the East European nations and the People's Republic of China for educational, technical and other assistance. Gradually, however, they moved back toward the center, and in the mid-1970's they agreed to seek aid from a Western consortium of nations and from various world organizations, and even sought bilateral aid. In pursuing their policy, Burma's rulers avoided involvement in the Vietnam conflict and remained outside the cold war. When they found the Nonaligned Movement moving too close to the Soviet position on world affairs, they withdrew, even though they were among the founding members.

Their withdrawal, however, did not mark the first time they clashed with other socialist states; in 1967, when China sought to export its Cultural Revolution to Burma, the Burmese reacted, first with violence and then with firmness, and the two nations suspended relations while the Chinese used propaganda and aid to the BCP in an effort to bring down the Burma government. In 1970, the two nations quietly restored their relations on a more sober basis.

In 1983, the military government of Burma faced a severe test when the North Koreans attempted to assassinate South Korean leaders while the latter were in Burma on a state visit. Although the plot was successful and several South Korean Cabinet members were killed, the Burmese acted swiftly and found, tried and imprisoned the assassins. They also broke off diplomatic relations with North Korea.

As 1984 draws to a close, Burma faces crucial and difficult problems that it no longer can ignore. Its central problem is the question of leadership succession. Since the coup, no important decisions have been taken without the approval of Burma's de facto leader, Ne Win. The question of succession became a major one when he announced in 1981 that, because of advancing age—he is in his 70's—and a desire to see a smooth transition in leadership, he was taking the first step in relinquishing power by resigning as the nation's President. Since the office was more symbolic than powerful, he intended to hold on to real power by continuing as head of the party. Three years have passed since his announcement and Ne

Win has taken no further action in the projected surrender of power.

In Burma today, there is no individual in power with the stature to match Ne Win's. He was a close and trusted friend of Aung San—the father of independent Burma—and one of the “Thirty Heroes” who secretly trained under the Japanese before World War II to lead a revolution against the British. Later, he became a distinguished commander of the army and the head of the armed forces.⁴ As the author of the coup, the creator of the BSPP and the unchallenged leader of the nation for the past two decades, he has not permitted any subordinate to stand too close to him for too long a period. From time to time, a fellow officer has been permitted to rise and stand by Ne Win's side and appear to be his potential successor. But, with the exception of President San Yu, all have subsequently been forced out of military and public life.

San Yu, who is in his late sixties, rose to high office; and during the 1970's, he served as secretary general of the BSPP and as chief of staff of the armed forces. By 1977, he was so popular in the party that he actually polled more votes than Ne Win polled for a seat on the Central Committee. Shortly thereafter, however, he was stripped of offices and seemed headed for oblivion; nevertheless, in 1981, Ne Win partially restored him by allowing the Council of State to name him as its chairman, thus making him President of Burma. At his advanced age, San Yu is unlikely to be more than a transitional leader, once Ne Win actually surrenders power.

NE WIN'S SUCCESSOR

Thus, the question remains: who will succeed Ne Win and what course will he follow as national leader? It is fairly safe to assume that the new leader will be a military officer. Two possible candidates are General Aye Ko, the secretary general of the party and secretary of the Council of State—the second ranking officer in the government—and Major General Tin Yi, an intelligence officer who recently served as vice chief of staff of the armed forces. A year ago, Tin Yi was elected to the Council of State, thus giving him a position in the government hierarchy. But neither of these men has wide political or civil administrative experience. Neither has had much exposure to the public nor has either one been involved with important economic and social decisions. If Ne Win selects either of these men, the chosen successor will have to prove himself as a political leader and consolidate his power over potential rivals before he can make a real impact on national policy.

If Ne Win searches outside the military for a successor, he will find there are few civilians who have achieved prominence and authority under the present regime. Those who have risen to the top have shown no desire to build a popular following and therefore have no real political base. Maung Maung, lawyer, scholar and writer and Ne Win's close personal friend, rose steadily to his

³For background on minority-Burman relations since independence, see Josef Silverstein, *Burmese Politics: The Struggle for National Unity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980).

⁴For more details, see Won Z. Yoon, *Japan's Scheme for the Liberation of Burma: The Role of the Minami Kikan and the “Thirty Comrades”* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1973).

present position of membership on the central executive committee (CEC) of the party, but has not used his position to enhance himself politically. The same can be said for Maung Maung Kha, the present Prime Minister and a member of the CEC. He is an administrator rather than a politician, and is not known to have any following either in or outside the party.

Some observers believe that Ne Win favors a collective leadership after he leaves office. He has expressed his approval of the joint leadership that emerged in Yugoslavia after Tito's death. But if that is his intention, he has made no real provisions for it in the party or the government; nor has he prepared the people for it by his statements or actions.

If there is no resolution of the succession issue before Ne Win's death, the struggle for power may be long and divisive, and the leader or leaders may find it impossible to solve growing problems both in the economy and the society. If a weak leader comes to power, the army (which has been cohesive and loyal to Ne Win) may divide. No officers have the prestige in contemporary Burma to match Ne Win's record. The present crop of younger senior officers entered the armed forces after independence and gained their positions through service in combat and administration. Over time, rivalries have developed between field commanders and headquarters. There also have been indications that among the younger officers, majors and below, who entered service after the coup, there is a division between those who would like to see the military return to its professional role and leave politics to the civilians and those who would like to see the present multiple rule of the military continue. Whether there is any officer in the armed forces today who has the ability and personality to keep the military united is yet to be demonstrated.

The party, which is dominated by retired officers, has begun to establish itself among the people and to seek a popular following. When it was first organized, many officers were shunted into its ranks as a means of purging the military of its less capable leaders. Over the years, these individuals have risen to high positions in the party; and as the BSPP grows in power, they have become rivals of active military officers.

There was a major purge of the party in 1976, and 50,000 members were dropped; among those purged were many of its leaders.⁵ Rival factions may still exist below the surface in the party. In a power struggle, they might emerge and seek to unite with factions in the armed forces in order to seize power. Other possibilities of realignment might follow the sudden death of Ne Win,

⁵M. C. Tun, "Diversions on the Road to Socialism," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 3, 1976, p. 18.

⁶Unless otherwise indicated, the statistical information was drawn from *Report to the Pyithu Hluttaw: The Financial, Economic and Social Conditions of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma* (Rangoon: Ministry of Planning and Finance, 1984).

⁷"The Real Market is Black," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 17, 1984, p. 80.

and all suggest that the question of leadership will take precedence and that until it is settled, all other questions facing Burma will languish.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

But can Burma afford the luxury of a power struggle or a weak and ineffective political leader for any length of time? Burma's economy has reached a plateau, and new and costly decisions must be made if it is to continue to grow. Today, Burma has an expanding population; in 1982-1983, the government estimated that there were 35.8 million people and that the population was growing at a rate of 2.3 percent. This is a young population, with 39.7 percent below the age of 15 and 53.6 percent between the ages of 15 and 59.⁶ If this growing work force is to be productive, there must be a significant and continuous increase in jobs.

Traditionally, much of the population has been underemployed in agriculture, where labor intensive methods are used. Given the nature of rice production, most agricultural workers are employed sporadically for an eight-month period. For the rest of the year, some are employed in secondary household handicraft or drift into the cities and towns looking for work as well as excitement.

But the cities and larger towns do not offer expanding opportunities. Most of the farm workers who move into urban areas are under- or nonskilled workers who have little to offer to potential employers in the few large factories. Even among the best educated, jobs are hard to find. Although the government no longer publishes unemployment statistics, it reports that more than 30,000 university and technical school graduates enter the market annually, seeking employment for which they have been trained. Many take jobs in the few large factories without pay in order to be eligible for a job when someone who is being paid dies or retires. Each year, a few of the better educated with connections abroad migrate. However, this safety valve does little to relieve pressures on the economy to employ willing workers, trained or not, in useful and gainful positions. Many find jobs in the armed forces, but there are no reports on the number taken in each year; they also find employment in government service, but again, their number does not appear in government reports. Finally, the black market provides jobs either in the supply chain, moving goods from the border to the cities and towns, or in the marketplace. But while the black market is large—estimated at nearly one-fourth the size of the legal economy—it, too, is limited in the number of people it can employ.⁷

The solution for Burma's economic problems can be found only in rapid expansion in all sectors. Paddy production, which appears to have leveled off at 14 million tons, could be increased appreciably by broadening the use of the new "miracle" strains and employing new technology; it also could be increased by multiple cropping. But neither course can be taken without costs. At least one rural economist has suggested that Burma now

grows its "miracle" rice on the best land and that increasing the program would mean using marginal lands, where productivity will be more costly and will probably not equal the yields from the best lands.

Multiple cropping might be an easier solution, since only approximately 15 percent of the land is irrigated; but irrigation is very expensive, requiring new dams, more pumping stations and a vast new network of pipes. It will also require energy, a commodity that is in short supply and can only be expanded with costly imported crude and refined fuels.

The problems associated with paddy apply to some extent to other crops. But here, new technology and machine and chemical rather than human labor can make the difference. Timber and mining offer opportunities for expanding the economy, but their expansion is limited by political insecurity in the areas the government does not exploit on a regular basis. It should also be noted that the insurgents extract raw materials on an irregular basis and sell them on the black market. This denies jobs to the employable in government-held territories and revenue to the treasury. But because these products pay partly for black market imports, they already contribute to the total economy.

It is the urban sector that needs rapid development if growth is to be continuous and if Burma's expanding population is to find gainful employment. Despite the socialist rhetoric, the bulk of this sector is in private hands. In 1982-1983, there were 41,041 factories, of which 38,660 were privately owned. But most were very small, employing 10 or fewer workers. In the nation as a whole, there were only 662 factories employing 51 or more workers; compared with the government figures for 1978-1979, the figure represented a loss of 86 factories.⁸ Altogether, this sector employed 1.15 million in 1982-1983, slightly more than 8 percent of the total work force.

FINANCING EXPANSION

If this sector is to expand significantly, an infusion of capital and technology is needed. Burma's strategy for its fourth five year plan is to create export-oriented industries and stimulate the full utilization of plant capacity—in 1982-1983, it used only 72 percent—to create new productive capacity geared to domestic raw materials. But to succeed, Burma needs more energy than it presently produces. Ne Win has opposed the importation of high cost foreign fuels, both crude and refined, and Burma has looked in vain, both on land and in the sea, for new energy sources to increase its own production beyond the 1982-1983 production of slightly more than nine million barrels of crude.

Natural gas has been found offshore, but the government must decide whether or not to invest precious capital for its recovery and transport. Other Southeast Asian

nations also have natural gas resources and sell their surplus abroad. Thus, if it were to enter this field, Burma would find well-established competition; and exploiting its natural gas resource might be more costly and risky than importing foreign crude and refining it in Burma's partially used refining plant capacity. The generation of electricity, too, could be expanded, but the costs of transmission lines, power stations and hydroelectric projects must be weighed against other demands for Burma's limited investment capital.

If Burma is to go forward economically, it must have an energy policy that will assure the nation of a steady flow of oil or other fuel in order to plan and execute decisions about growth in all sectors of the economy. Today, it has neither a policy nor adequate supplies. Long lines at the gas pumps and occasional shortages of kerosene—a main fuel for household use—attest to the nation's inability to meet even its most basic needs. With one of its refineries idled and the other four working at less than total capacity, Burma does not produce enough crude for domestic purposes; and with Ne Win seemingly unwilling to face this fact his successor will hardly be able to avoid it.

If Burma decided to embark on a major industrial program, how could it be financed? Burma could borrow abroad, but under Ne Win the nation's planners cannot consider loans from private sources. Thus far, aid has been accepted only from multinational organizations like the World Bank, or from other states, either on a bilateral or a multilateral basis. Ne Win has established a good credit rating by repaying borrowed money promptly. Burma's foreign debt is estimated to be \$1.8 billion; this is not a large sum compared to the debts of other developing nations. However, Burma's debt service ratio is estimated at between 31 and 35 percent, which is large. Thus, whether the government should borrow and invest in manufacturing in order to broaden the economy and absorb the growing population in today's uncertain market requires major decisions, decisions that must be made soon if the recent growth in the economy is to be sustained.

Nonetheless, Ne Win's strong aversion to foreign private investors and banks makes it unlikely that Burma will move in that direction while he is in command. It also is unlikely that he will approve of the creation of free trade or industrial zones open to foreign firms, because this might lead to invidious comparison between capitalist and socialist industrial development. While such areas have not been an unmixed blessing to other developing countries, they offer an alternative that might be consid-

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Josef Silverstein is the author of many publications on Burma, including *Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977) and *Burmese Politics: The Struggle for National Unity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980).

⁸The comparative information comes from the 1978 volume of *Report to the Pyithu Hluttaw*.

In Malaysia, the authors foresee "relative stability for the next three years at least Malaysia is emerging from the recession with some interesting economic initiatives under way The constitutional crisis was not painless, but a reasonable solution should be acceptable to reasonable people. [And] the Islamic issue is quiescent."

Malaysia: Policies and Leadership

BY R. S. MILNE

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FOR Malaysia, 1983 and the first half of 1984 were dominated by the effects of the world recession, tempered by the start of recovery, and the scheduled elections for office in UMNO (United Malays National Organization, the dominant component of the governing *Barisan Nasional*). These elections, however, left the leadership unchanged. More surprising were some new directions in the government's already innovative economic policy, including agricultural policy, and a constitutional crisis so sensitive that for weeks it was not reported in the local press.

At the same time, Malaysia's foreign policy did not change. Increasingly, that foreign policy is best seen in the context of Malaysia's membership in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), which in January, 1984, acquired a sixth member, newly independent Brunei.¹ Although points of friction persisted among individual members of ASEAN,² by mid-1984 some trends common to all six countries were emerging. After an ASEAN ministerial meeting in Jakarta in July, 1984, one evaluation pointed to four developments.³ First, ASEAN now perceived China as a greater long-term threat than Vietnam. Second, although ASEAN still opposed the Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea and continued to support the rival coalition that included the Khmer Rouge and the followers of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, there was a change in emphasis at the meeting. The ministers called for a reconciliation of all Kampuchean factions, including the de facto government. Third, the ASEAN countries looked increasingly toward closer cooperation with a wider range of countries in the region, broadly defined, as already symbolized by the status granted Papua New Guinea as an ASEAN "observer." Fourth, it seemed that ASEAN was acting more as a political grouping. However, not all of these observations

are new and/or correct. The second point is indeed well-taken, although its full implications may not be clear. The third and fourth developments have unfolded gradually, and there seems to be no particular reason to regard the recent ministerial meeting as a watershed. The first point requires more scrutiny.

Historically, the ASEAN states have had divergent views on the salience of external threats. For historical reasons and because of border incidents, Thailand has been the most wary of Vietnam and the most appreciative of China's role as a possible check on Vietnam. Indonesia and Malaysia have been the most sympathetic to Vietnam and the most apprehensive of China. Malaysia has been motivated by lingering doubts about China's attraction for its Chinese population (one-third) and by continued broadcasts from China in support of Malaysia's small groups of (largely Chinese) Communist insurgents. Is there any reason to believe that these divisions of opinion have ceased to exist, or that long-term considerations are now prevailing over short term? To be sure, ASEAN's desire for reconciliation in Kampuchea gives some support to this interpretation. ASEAN's desire to reach an accommodation with Vietnam is also indicated by the fact that the other ASEAN nations approve of continuing informal talks between Malaysian and Indonesian officials with Vietnamese leaders. Yet, when all this has been said, there are still divisions among ASEAN countries on the issue, and Malaysia still considers China the greater threat.

Relations with the United States have also been influenced by the question of China. During United States Secretary of State George Shultz's visit to Malaysia in July, 1984, the Malaysian government not only raised economic issues, like the United States surplus in trade between the two countries, but also expressed concern over United States technological aid and possible arms sales to China. Soviet bases in Vietnam have also aroused ASEAN fears. But even here there was a China angle. As was pointed out by Malaysia's Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, then foreign minister, a main danger of the Soviet pres-

¹The other five are Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

²Hans H. Indorf, "A Hobson's Choice for Malaysia," *Current History*, April, 1983, p. 186.

³*New Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), July 18, 1984.

ence there was that it might provoke China to react, which could lead to just the kind of conflict in the region that ASEAN was most anxious to prevent. A more immediate Soviet threat was perceived in the Soviet Union's statement that in response to ASEAN opposition to the Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea, it might aid insurgency in the ASEAN countries. Malaysia delivered a note of protest, and members of the youth wings of the ruling party staged an anti-Soviet rally.

THE ECONOMY

Malaysia fared better than many other countries during the world economic recession. Nevertheless, growth fell from an annual rate of nearly 8 percent in the 1970's to under 6 percent in the early 1980's. Average figures conceal the damage to the groups and individuals that suffered more than others. Because of the fall in export prices for agricultural and other primary products, revenues from rubber and tin were particularly hard hit. On the other hand, returns from manufacturing exports like electronic equipment increased, and new natural gas exports contributed to total exports in 1983. Initially, the government response to the recession was a countercyclical policy of increased expenditure and investment. But the budgets in the fall of 1982 and 1983 reversed the trend and cut expenditures, particularly in defense and in development projects.

The economy seemed brighter in mid-1984, with improved growth figures and better export prospects. All the same, the recession had left its mark. From 1981 onward, the current balance of payments was in deficit; in July, 1984, the deficit was identified by Minister of Finance Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah as Malaysia's most important economic priority.⁴ Concurrently, the national debt, and the resultant interest payments, rose substantially. However, provisional 1984 figures reflected an improvement in the trade balance, although Malaysia's deficit in services remained serious.

The appointment of Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister in July, 1981, coincided with the onset of the recession. His roving and innovative mind conceived a series of economic policies that were the product of his own, rather than collective, thinking. Understanding their interrelationship proved to be an exacting task for his ministers.

One policy that made a great impact was "Look East" (1982),⁵ which arose from disillusionment with Western values and adopted Japan and South Korea as models for economic development. To some extent the emphasis was on techniques: quality control, the open office concept,

and so on. But for the most part it was on attitudes: virtues like efficiency, sincerity, cleanliness, loyalty and hard work deemed worthy of emulation by Malaysians. This corresponded to a "leadership by example" campaign launched in 1983. Increasing numbers of teachers, officials, businessmen and exponents of particular skills such as mat-weaving were sent for training in Japan or South Korea.

Critics observed that some features of industry in these countries, like working conditions and the protection of human rights, were not worthy of emulation. They also pointed to instances of friction in the labor relations of Japanese and South Korean firms in business in Malaysia. Further, they claimed that these countries' achievements could not be duplicated in Malaysia. Japan, for instance, had never been a colony, and its economic predominance in the region implied that other countries there must inevitably be dependent on it. This dependency was illustrated by the nature of Malaysia's economic dealings with Japan. Malaysia had a huge trade deficit; Malaysia's exports to Japan were overwhelmingly primary products; Japan's investment in Malaysia (the highest of any foreign country) was concentrated on labor-intensive and resource-based industries; and so on. Was it likely that Malaysian admiration for Japan's economic efficiency would lead that country to forgo those economic advantages that a stronger country can exact from a weaker? In some of his 1984 observations, Malaysia's Prime Minister showed that he was aware of this consideration.

A new feature, deriving from the Japanese example, was the establishment of half-a-dozen trading companies modeled on Japan's *sogoshoshas*. A more general idea, also Japanese in inspiration, was launched by Mahathir in February, 1983. Malaysia Incorporated (Malaysia Inc.), derived from Japan Inc., was based on the premise that government and business should work together in close partnership.

In the early 1970's, Malaysia's New Economic Policy (NEP) aimed to relieve poverty and improve the economic position of the Malays, then politically dominant but economically backward.⁶ To effect this, the proportion of Malay ownership and management of the economy was to be increased. Because of the shortage of well-to-do and trained Malays, however, in the short run this could be achieved only through government bodies, acting "on behalf of" the Malays, like PERNAS (the state trading corporation) at the federal level, or the State Economic Development Corporations at the state level. The policy was successful, but only because such bodies' operations were included in the "Malay" statistics.

Several consequences resulted. First, the structure of state economic bodies became complex, involving a host of subsidiaries. At the state level many were inefficient. Worse, Bumiputra Finance Limited (BMF), a subsidiary of Bank Bumiputra (established to help Malays in business), provided an international scandal. Inadequate su-

⁴New Straits Times, July 9, 1984.

⁵Diane K. Mauzy and R. S. Milne, "The Mahathir Administration in Malaysia: Discipline through Islam," *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 56, no. 4 (1983-1984), pp. 627-630; Jomo, ed., *The Sun Also Sets: Lessons in Looking East* (Petaling Jaya: INSAN, 1983).

⁶R. S. Milne, "The Politics of Malaysia's New Economic Policy," *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 49, no. 2 (1976), pp. 235-262.

pervision permitted too many speculative loans in the Hong Kong property market. When some of the firms in question failed, the BMF losses were staggering; in one reckoning, if the Malaysian dollars lost were joined together, they would stretch round the world five times!⁷ A few BMF officials had drawn huge "consultancy fees," a BMF investigator sent to Hong Kong was murdered, and there were rumors that Malaysian politicians were implicated. Second, the share of the public sector in the economy increased, easily surpassing the proportions in Thailand or South Korea. Third, at a time of recession when government resources were strained, public expectations of more and better government services had grown.

Early in 1983, Mahathir announced a new policy of "privatization",⁸ some functions performed by government bodies would be handed over to the private sector. It had always been contemplated that the government organizations acting on behalf of the Malays would one day be privatized. But hitherto this had not been feasible because of a shortage of capable Malays. In 1983, there were apparently enough to take over this type of organization, as well as the organizations that provided the infrastructure of transportation, communications and public utilities.

Yet the implementation of the concept was cautious: a third, private, television channel was established, and arrangements were made to transfer some telecommunications functions and some facilities at Port Kelang, near Kuala Lumpur, to the private sector. Other possibilities were considered, like the Malaysian Airlines System (MAS), parts of the roads and railroads systems, and the postal service. Progress was slow because of the problems involved. Where could the private sector raise the capital necessary to purchase these assets? How best could non-Malay and foreign capital cooperate with Malay capital? Should privatization sometimes take the form of partial privatization, the government retaining an interest? Would the trade unions, set on retaining jobs, cooperate? In the case of those privatized concerns that enjoyed monopoly status, how could the public interest be protected?

Another policy, elaborated in 1983, was the encouragement of heavy industry via a Heavy Industries Corporation (HICOM). Although some Malaysian manufactures had been exported successfully, the range of products had been limited. Domestically added value had been low, and the skills required of the labor force were simple. The new policy was to promote industry based on sophisticated technology, like iron and steel and pet-

rochemicals. An example that attracted great attention was the new car (the "Proton Saga"), to be manufactured by a subsidiary of HICOM and the Japanese multinational Mitsubishi.

But even when a car came into full production in the 1990's it would be difficult to avoid losses. For a time, given limited export prospects, Malaysian consumers would have to subsidize it. In the longer term, Mahathir perceived that the car, and some similar products, would need a larger domestic market. He proposed, therefore, that the population should increase to approximately seventy million by about the year 2100. To encourage this, the government extended maternity benefits to women civil servants in 1984 to cover five children instead of three.

AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Finally, a "new agricultural policy" was announced early in 1984. It included introducing technical improvements, like higher quality strains of rubber. But its main thrust was to alleviate poverty. Although the NEP had initially seemed effective in reducing poverty, by the early 1980's the incidence of poverty had actually increased to 43 percent. It was higher in rural areas; for *padi* (rice) farmers, for example, the incidence of poverty was 76 percent, despite many improvements in the quality of life, like better health services and higher literacy and improved infrastructure through irrigation. A root cause of peasant poverty was the small size of holdings. About half the rubber smallholders and almost two-thirds of rice farmers owned less than a hectare (two and a half acres) of land. Technological changes permitting greater use of machinery or fertilizers benefited richer, but not poorer, peasants.

The new policy aimed at a more efficient use of resources. Those forced to leave the land would be absorbed by jobs in manufacturing or service industries. Those who stayed would acquire benefits from superior technology and from more efficient organization. Small agricultural units would be grouped together and developed cooperatively, although individual owners would be issued certificates of entitlement. Regrouping would reduce infrastructural costs, and new marketing facilities would be provided. Government subsidies would be reduced, but private funds would be sought to promote development. But since the shares of individuals would be based on their original holdings, inequalities between richer and poorer peasants would persist.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

The constitutional crisis of 1983 was both intricate and politically sensitive.⁹ Basically, it arose because the Malaysian constitution was modeled on the British, and did not explicitly describe the respective powers of the King (*Yang Dipertuan Agung*) and the Prime Minister. In Britain, the limits of royal power were determined over centuries, and the learning process included the execution

⁷Tunku Abdul Rahman, *Contemporary Issues in Malaysian Politics* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1984), p. 118.

⁸*Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)*, September 15, 1983, pp. 69-76.

⁹For the views of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, who felt freer to comment than most, see Tunku Abdul Rahman, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-19.

of one monarch and the deposition of another. In Malaysia, the King and the Rulers'* powers were not spelled out, the closest clue being that on some issues, according to the constitution, the King had to act on the advice of the Prime Minister. Before 1983, at the state level, there had been Rulers who, bolstered by the traditional deference accorded to them, refused to take the advice of their *Menteris Besar* and had even forced several of them out of office.¹⁰ Federally, the King (the Sultan of Pahang) was due to end his five-year term of office early in 1984. His fellow Rulers had the duty of electing his successor; and it seemed that their choice would be one of two Rulers (the Sultan of Johor or the Sultan of Perak), both of whom had given indications of "independent-mindedness."¹¹

In August, 1983, the government introduced constitutional amendments to prevent the King from using a veto or on his own initiative declaring a state of emergency.¹² However, the Rulers refused to accept this, and although Parliament passed the amendments, the royal assent was withheld. Negotiations between government and Rulers took place for several months, initially without being reported in the local media. In November, the government took the issue to the people by holding a series of mass rallies. Happily, a compromise was reached in December. The King assented to the amendments, but a further series of amendments were passed in January which, in effect, produced a compromise solution. Among other provisions, the King was given only limited power to delay legislation, but the provisions concerning a state of emergency were dropped. In due course, the Sultan of Johor, who had been elected King, took over in April, 1984.

MALAY POLITICS

The government's Islamization process, which had gained considerable momentum over the past two years, slowed down perceptibly and purposefully in 1984. While the implementation of earlier proposals continues, there have been no important recent proposals. As a result, the fears and concerns of the non-Muslims have largely abated, and the Islamic "issue" is now quiescent.

However, the intra-Malay debate over the proper and desired role of Islam continues. The key consideration is the challenge posed by *Partai Islam Se-Malaysia* (PAS), since the Islamic purist "Young Turks" succeeded in taking charge of the party. With the new fundamentalist leadership, the political goals of PAS have become more

radical. The party demands an "Islamic state" (undefined, but including Islamic law and a constitution based on the *Koran*) and ridicules the government's Islamization as tokenism. The new party leaders also reject nationalism as anti-Islamic; they claim to have little faith in elections; and they are clearly enamored of the Iranian model (large posters of Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini are sometimes "unofficially" displayed at rallies and seminars). In some ways, PAS has been transformed into more of a movement for an Islamic cause than a party giving top priority to winning electoral contests.

It is this changing nature of the PAS challenge that causes concern. UMNO has won every by-election it has contested since the 1982 general elections. As the dominant partner in the government, it must remain vigilant against Islamic exhortation and revolutionary fervor emanating from any group, but especially from a group as powerful, large and well-organized as PAS. Rural Malays traditionally have been susceptible to the appeal of militant Islamic rhetoric. Consequently, in July, 1984, the government arrested three Terengganu PAS members under the Internal Security Act on the grounds that they were inciting people to use violence to achieve their aims.¹³ Two days later the government proposed a new weapons law that would ban the possession of dangerous objects (like knives) even if they contained religious engravings. In early August, the government banned political gatherings in the four northern states because PAS political activities and the PAS call for a *sabil* (crusade) were threatening public order and security. PAS defied the ban and the police were instructed to take action. Currently, a parliamentary white paper on PAS activities is being prepared. It is expected that after it is debated in Parliament in October, and after the public is prepared, there may be a number of further arrests of radicals belonging to PAS.

The government has successfully countered the challenge of Islamic extremism to date, being careful not to create martyrs or to be perceived as acting in an un-Islamic fashion. But the problem is likely to persist, and the related danger is that the government will feel compelled to push Islamization further; this in turn could have a corrosive effect on ethnic relations.

THE UMNO ELECTIONS: CABINET CHANGES

The UMNO General Assembly in May, 1984,¹⁴ was of interest mostly because of the election of party officials. Mahathir was not opposed as party president, so the most important and exciting choice was the contest for deputy president between the incumbent, Datuk Musa Hitam, and Tengku Razaleigh, whom he had defeated three years before by about 200 votes out of over 1,200. Many factors could have influenced the result: the degree of Mahathir's support for Musa; the behavior of the candidates during the constitutional crisis; and money. The 1984 elections were the most expensive party elections in

*Editor's note: Nine of the thirteen Malaysian states are headed by a hereditary Ruler; the Ruler is advised and assisted by a chief minister or a *Menteri Besar* (the equivalent of a chief minister) responsible to an elected state legislature.

¹⁰*FEER*, June 30, 1983, pp. 26-34 and July 14, 1983, p. 16.

¹¹On the Sultan of Johor, who in fact became King, see *Asiaweek*, February 24, 1984, pp. 30-37.

¹²*FEER*, August 25, 1983, pp. 20-22.

¹³*New Straits Times*, July 11, 1984.

¹⁴*FEER*, June 7, 1984, pp. 10-11.

Malaysian history. Something like \$M30 million (\$US 13 million) was reportedly spent for all the contests, to say nothing of nonmonetary inducements and threats. Afterward, UMNO decided to investigate expenditures to see if the rules needed tightening.

When the votes were counted, Musa's margin over Razaleigh was almost exactly the same as before. The three vice presidential positions were won by an incumbent, the seemingly perennial Ghafar Baba, and two newcomers, Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, minister in the Prime Minister's department, and Datuk Haji Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, *Menteri Besar* of Terengganu. The former had the support of both Mahathir and Musa, while Mokhtar benefited from the strategy of the *Mentris Besar* to concentrate their votes on one of themselves. The other most important contest was for a youth leader (the winner automatically becoming a vice president). Encik Anwar Ibrahim, who had defeated Datuk Haji Suhaimi Kamaruddin two years before, easily beat off Suhaimi's challenge. Results for the 20 Supreme Council elected posts were extensively analyzed. The main conclusions were: the turnover was high (11 out of the 20 were new); *Mentris Besar* were better represented than before; and candidates known to be close to Mahathir or Musa enjoyed an edge. Related to this last point, those who were most staunchly pro-government during the constitutional crisis were favored.

The UMNO assembly reflected the growing importance of a Malay middle class. More of the delegates were businessmen than before and fewer were teachers. And more of the money spent on the elections came from Malay sources than ever before.

To some extent, the Cabinet changes in July, 1984, followed the trends in the UMNO elections. Interest was concentrated on Razaleigh, then minister of finance, because it seemed that he must suffer some penalty for having challenged Musa unsuccessfully. But if he were excluded from the Cabinet, his financial expertise might be lost, his followers would be aggrieved, and UMNO strength in his home base of Kelantan (only marginally greater than that of PAS) would be seriously weakened. As a compromise, he was moved to the rather less prestigious post of minister of trade and industry, losing his top party post in Kelantan and his position as UMNO treasurer as well.

Some who did well in the UMNO elections were given positions offering more scope for their talents. Badawi was moved to the Ministry of Education, often a stepping-stone to a higher position. Anwar became minister of agriculture, which gave him a chance to act on an issue about which he was greatly concerned, the relief of poverty. Many who were newly appointed or were promoted could be identified as protégés of Mahathir, Musa or both. The most spectacular appointment, replacing

Razaleigh as minister of finance, was Daim Zainuddin, a tycoon who was a close personal friend of the Prime Minister's. On the other hand, a few people close to Razaleigh were dropped. The veteran Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie lost the Foreign Affairs Ministry, but it was announced that he would be used as a special envoy.

NON-MALAY POLITICS

During this period, non-Malay politics were dominated by the problems of the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA). The party had done surprisingly well at the 1982 elections, winning more seats than expected,¹⁵ but during the next two years it lost a handful of seats at by-elections to the Democratic Action party (DAP), the main opposition party appealing to non-Malays.

One of these was Seremban, won from the DAP in 1982 by MCA president Datuk Lee San Choon with a narrow majority. However, Lee stepped down as president in March, 1983, and in October resigned his seat, which was regained by DAP in the ensuing by-election on November 19. Lee's reasons for giving up the leadership were not clear. He backed his deputy, Datuk Neo Yee Pan, to succeed him, and Neo took over as acting president. However, he was soon challenged by Tan Koon Swan, a tycoon who had recently become active in the party, and had headed its large business organization, Multi-Purpose Holdings.

After allegations by the Tan faction that its opponents were guilty of using "phantom voters" at divisional elections (the prelude to General Assembly elections) and other irregularities, Tan and some of his supporters were forced out of their party and government posts. The Tan group instigated legal proceedings, but these were contested by the incumbents and a deadlock resulted. Once more, Lee's behavior invited, but defied, analysis. It would have been no surprise if he had supported Neo, apparently a former protégé, but in fact he seemed to lean toward Tan. It was even rumored that he might try to use the situation to make a comeback as president.

POLITICS IN SABAH AND SARAWAK

There were two important political occurrences in the

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¹⁵Diane K. Mauzy, "The 1982 General Elections in Malaysia: A Mandate for Change?" *Asian Survey*, vol. 23, no. 4 (1983), pp. 506-511.

BURMA

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ered by some future Burmese leader. Given Burma's steady population increase and its stagnating economy, major decisions await the new leader, who will not have much time to reflect before taking action.

THE INSURGENTS

The need for decisions is not limited to the economy. The new leader/leaders will also have to decide how to end the government's continuous warfare against political and indigenous insurgents. Today, the former hold territory along Burma's borders with China, Laos and Thailand. With an armed force of 190,000 men, most of whom spend much of their time in the field fighting the rebels, the state has managed to keep the rebels away from the main population centers, but it has not been able to defeat them. Although there is an illusion of domestic tranquility in urban areas, the steady stream of casualties and the demand for more military equipment attest to the fact that real peace has eluded the rulers.

During the past two decades, Ne Win has used two different tactics in dealing with the insurgents—warfare and negotiations. In 1981, the Burma Communist party sought a negotiated settlement. In direct discussions with Ne Win and his subordinates, the BCP called for recognition of the party, its armed forces and its liberated areas. When these demands were rejected, the BCP countered with the suggestion that Burma should change its constitution and allow a multiparty system to emerge, thus making it possible for the BCP to contest legally for power. The BCP also suggested that its armed units be included in Burma's armed forces, that two of its leaders be given seats on the State Defense Council and that the territories it holds be recognized as autonomous regions under the national government. Ne Win rejected these proposals, and no further discussions or negotiations have taken place.⁹

If negotiations have failed, so have the government's military campaigns. The BCP has an estimated fighting force of 12,000, located in the difficult jungle border terrain. They are well-armed and well-trained. Although the government has mounted major assaults against them each year during the dry season, it has been unsuccessful in dislodging them. At times, government forces have been less well-armed than the insurgents, and the steady casualties they have suffered have caused some field commanders to criticize the policies emanating from Rangoon. In its present location, the BCP holds territory astride the China-Burma frontier, and in the past the insurgents have had military as well as propaganda support from China. During the present decade, the Chinese have reduced their equipment aid and the BCP has turned to opium—both grown and transported through

its areas of control—as the financial basis of its revolt.

So long as the BCP is limited to its present location, it is unable to reach the mass of Burmese people, and its influence on society is not great. Further, in its present location, the party recruits mainly among the hill peoples, although its leadership appears to be solidly in Burman hands. Thus, while the BCP is no immediate threat to the military-led government, its fortunes could change. If a power struggle emerges in Rangoon, it is not inconceivable that the BCP might try to join forces with one of the factions and thus find its way back into population centers. Ne Win's carrot and stick policy has not ended the struggle; the new leader or leaders will find it no less difficult. But the new leaders will not be able to afford the time and expense involved in current fruitless policies as they seek to come to grips with Burma's immediate social and economic problems.

In military terms, the second greatest threat to the government comes from the Karens. Elements of that ethnic group have been at war with all Burma governments since 1949. Unlike the BCP, the Karens do not want to replace the government in Rangoon with one of their own; rather, they seek a separate state, populated with their own people and located in an area that is economically viable and includes a seaport.

Over the years, Burma governments have offered the Karens a state within the union. But the Karens reject the offer, because it does not include the delta region where thousands of Karens live intermingled with Burmans and other ethnic groups, and because such a state would not be economically viable. Today, the Karen insurgents hold territory astride the Burma-Thai border and control a major portion of the illegal flow of goods entering the black market. By taxing these goods, they have financed their guerrilla struggle against the Burma government.

Despite many military assaults against them during the dry seasons, the Karens have been able to hold their territory; they have even been able to launch suicide raids into Rangoon, to make the people aware of their cause and their ability to penetrate even to the capital. In 1984, Ne Win authorized new tactics to be used against the Karens. The army remained in the field after the beginning of the rainy season, and in vigorous fighting it has driven the Karens out of some of their strongholds and has disrupted the flow of goods across the border. But the costs to both sides have been high, and the government does not seem to be able to win a clear victory because the Karens can retreat across the border, where government forces cannot pursue them.

Thus far, no Burma government has offered an acceptable solution. An autonomous region or a state with real powers over local affairs might be worked out if the parties involved could agree on a territorial base for the Karen state. The continuous war and its costly drain on men and material, to say nothing of the economic costs of

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⁹Josef Silverstein, "Burma in 1981: The Changing of the Guardians Begins," *Asian Survey*, February, 1982, pp. 182-183.

MALAYSIA

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Borneo states in 1983–1984. In Sabah, an anomaly which had existed since 1976 was resolved. Berjaya, the state government party, and the United Sabah National Organization (USNO), which previously controlled the state government under Tun Mustapha, had been *Barisan* partners yet bitter political foes. However, in April, 1984, USNO was expelled from the *Barisan Nasional* because Tun Mustapha tried to “incite unrest” by covertly breaking ranks with the government during the constitutional crisis.¹⁶

In Sarawak, the anomalies concerning Iban political divisions have been papered over but not resolved. Following the late December, 1983, state elections,¹⁷ Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS), a new Iban party formed mostly by defectors from the Sarawak National party (SNAP), was admitted into the *Barisan*. While SNAP decided at the last moment not to oppose the admission of the PBDS, relations between SNAP and the other parties in the state coalition are not good, and it is possible that SNAP may again move to the opposition.

CONCLUSION

Malaysia is emerging from the recession with some interesting economic initiatives under way. At last, agriculture may be restructured and poverty may be tackled seriously. The constitutional crisis was not painless, but a reasonable solution should be acceptable to reasonable people. The “Islamic issue” is quiescent. MCA squabbles are currently unresolved, but, compared with Malay politics, they do not constitute a major problem. Inside UMNO, the elections have confirmed the existing leadership in power, so ensuring relative stability for the next three years at least. ■

¹⁶*New Straits Times*, April, 1984.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, December 31, 1983. The election results were: PBB-19; SUPP-11; SNAP-8; PBDS-6; Independents-4. The DAP lost all seven of its contests with SUPP.

VIETNAM

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nesian armed forces commander “Benny” Murdani, in Hanoi on a state visit, remarked publicly that Vietnam did not pose a threat to Southeast Asia.¹⁷ Murdani’s comments, echoed by other sources in Indonesia, created a flurry of concern in ASEAN capitals and raised the specter of a breakup of the alliance. Policy differences were papered over at an ASEAN summit conference held in the summer of 1984, but the incident served notice that Indonesia’s support for ASEAN’s hard-line position could not be taken for granted and that Jakarta might

¹⁷*FEER*, January 3, 1984.

¹⁸Agence France-Press (AFP) in English, August 3, 1983, reported in Survey of World Broadcasts (Far East), August 4, 1983, p. A3.

eventually decide to play an independent role in the Kampuchean conflict.

Another sign that international support for the anti-Vietnamese alliance was unraveling came when the Australian government decided not to cosponsor the annual ASEAN resolution at the UN General Assembly on seating the delegation from Pol Pot’s Democratic Kampuchea and demanding the withdrawal of Vietnamese occupation forces from the country. While the resolution passed, as usual, with a comfortable majority, Canberra’s decision indicated that the Labour government of Prime Minister Bob Hawke was increasingly inclined to adopt an independent stance on the issue. As in the case of Indonesia, the opponents in ASEAN have been able to work out a *modus vivendi*, but fundamental differences over policy have not been resolved.

Such signs of discord among their adversaries are undoubtedly comforting to party leaders in Vietnam, and confirm them in their optimism that, with patience, their policy will triumph in Indochina. But Hanoi, too, has its problems. One potential trouble spot is within Kampuchea. While the CGDK coalition does not pose an immediate threat to the Heng Samrin regime on either the political or the military plane, the Vietnamese have encountered some difficulty in winning acceptance for the Heng Samrin government as a legitimate alternative to the CGDK as the representative of the aspirations of the Kampuchean people. One aspect of this problem, of course, is in the international arena, where the Phnom Penh regime is still widely viewed as Hanoi’s puppet. This has been graphically displayed in the vote on the Kampuchean question at the United Nations each fall. Of equal or perhaps even greater concern to Hanoi, however, is the problem of strengthening the Heng Samrin regime so that it can defend itself and meet the needs of the Kampuchean people. This, after all, would be the most effective way for Hanoi to deflect international criticism of its policy in Indochina.

A LIMITED SUCCESS

In fact, however, Vietnamese success in “winning hearts and minds” in Kampuchea has been limited. Although living conditions have unquestionably improved in recent years, the PRK bureaucracy and the ruling Communist party—now officially renamed the Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary party—are still limited in both size and competence. The Phnom Penh regime is heavily dependent upon Vietnamese advisers at all levels of administration. In 1983, there were persistent reports of an extensive purge of provincial and local officials in western Kampuchea, suggesting that Phnom Penh was having some difficulty in maintaining the loyalty of its own personnel.¹⁸ Similar problems were encountered in the program to strengthen the PRK’s armed forces. Hindered by difficulties in recruitment and a high rate of desertion, the Kampuchean army has apparently taken little part in the current pacification effort, and

Vietnamese sources have conceded that it will take several years to transform it into an effective fighting force.¹⁹

Hanoi strategists have apparently tried to strengthen their hand by resettling ethnic Vietnamese in Kampuchea. Following press reports that thousands of Vietnamese had settled there since the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime in 1979, external sources charged that Vietnam was attempting to commit cultural genocide. Hanoi retorted that the numbers involved were relatively small, and consisted primarily of residents who had fled from the country during the civil war. While Hanoi's claim may be correct, the program was still a gamble, since the presence of large numbers of Vietnamese could arouse Khmer xenophobia, an emotion never far below the surface in Kampuchea.

Hanoi's problems in Kampuchea are primarily long-term; they do not pose an immediate threat. A more pressing problem, for both the short and the long term, is Vietnam's relationship with China. In recent years, several issues have contributed to the tension between the two countries—the Indochina crisis, Hanoi's treatment of its ethnic Chinese, and territorial disputes over the land border and in the South China Sea. But the primary factor is unquestionably the conflict over Kampuchea and Hanoi's decision to establish a treaty relationship with Moscow. This dispute will not be easy to resolve, because China shows no indication that it will accept Hanoi's "special relationship" with Laos and Kampuchea, and it has apparently begun to apply pressure on the Vietnamese in an effort to restore its own influence in the area.

The alliance with Moscow provides Hanoi with a degree of protection against its hostile neighbor but, in turn, the treaty virtually guarantees that a settlement will be even more difficult to achieve. In effect, Vietnam's local conflict over Kampuchea is linked with the Sino-Soviet dispute and the broader global balance of power. In the process, Hanoi has become increasingly dependent upon the Soviet Union and has lost much of the independence of action that it hoped to achieve after the conquest of Saigon. For Hanoi, the price for security on its Western border has not been cheap.²⁰

THE BALANCE SHEET

At the time of writing, the Vietnamese economy has embarked on a gradual recovery and there are few signs of domestic unrest. Vietnamese troops are firmly entrenched in Kampuchea, and the nation's borders are secure. The regime may hope that the next decade will not be so difficult as the last one. It would be premature,

¹⁹Paul Kattenburg, "So Many Enemies: The View from Hanoi," in *Indochina Issues* (June, 1983), p. 6.

²⁰Hanoi's dependence on Soviet support, and the linkage between the Sino-Vietnamese dispute and the broader split between Moscow and Beijing was graphically displayed during the recent talks between China and the Soviet Union held in Beijing. Hanoi appeared visibly nervous, despite Soviet assurances that it would not abandon its friends.

however, to assume that Vietnam has weathered the storms of the immediate postwar period and is now about to fulfill the exalted dreams expressed by party leaders at the moment of victory in 1975. If history is any guide, the regime faces further trials in both domestic and international affairs. In Vietnam, the struggle to transform the South into a socialist society has barely begun. As the last few years have vividly demonstrated, the population of the southern provinces has proved to be as stubbornly resistant to the voice of revolution emanating from Hanoi as it was earlier to the mobilization efforts of the Saigon regime and its patron, the United States. Party leaders appear determined to hold to a middle course that will lead ultimately to the realization of both their developmental and their ideological goals. That policy is a gamble, and much depends on the outcome.

In foreign affairs, Hanoi's real problem is not the Kampuchean crisis, but Vietnam's relationship with China. While Beijing today appears powerless to drive the Vietnamese out of Indochina or to change the minds of party leaders in Hanoi, China is a patient and resourceful adversary and will not easily abandon its determination to improve its position in mainland Southeast Asia and to bend Vietnam to its will. Hanoi's current solution—the link with Moscow—is probably logical under the circumstances and has probably served its purpose well.

But Vietnam's dependence on the Soviet Union is costly for the Vietnamese, and it seriously complicates Hanoi's effort to normalize relations with its Southeast Asian neighbors, with the United States, and with China itself. Vietnam has already indicated a desire to negotiate a long-term and comprehensive settlement in Southeast Asia. While a just solution will not be easy to achieve, it is in the long-term interests of all the parties concerned to seek it. ■

KAMPUCHEA

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the party has indissoluble historic links to the Indochina Communist party and to North Vietnam's leader, Ho Chi Minh, viewed as the father of Cambodian revolutionary activity. Indeed, at ceremonies honoring the party, Ho's bust is given pride of place, flanked by two deceased Cambodian revolutionaries, "Son Ngoc Minh" (Achar Mien) and Tou Samuth.

Ironically, the historical record reveals that in the early days of the ICP, Ho Chi Minh "urged the Vietnamese party not to take responsibility for the political fate of its neighbors," and even in the year 1950, there were only 40 Cambodians in the ICP.²⁰ The checkered history of Vietnamese relations with the Kampuchean Communist par-

²⁰See Ben Kiernan, "Origins of Khmer Communism," *Southeast Asian Affairs 1981* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1981), and Gareth Porter, "Vietnamese Communist Policy Toward Kampuchea, 1930-1970," in David P. Chandler and Ben Kiernan, eds., *Revolution and its Aftermath in Kampuchea* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, 1983), p. 59.

ty between 1951 and 1960 has been traced by Gareth Porter, who points out that the Vietnamese policy of supporting Prince Sihanouk's regime allowed the Kampucheans almost no scope for revolutionary activity or for recruitment, particularly since Sihanouk himself, during his years in power, openly attacked Cambodian leftists as potential traitors to his rule.²¹

In other words, the history of radicalism in Cambodia reveals that for nearly 20 years after 1955, Vietnam was a reluctant or indifferent parent to the movement, unwilling to recognize conditions or opportunities in Cambodia when these were not helpful to Vietnam's own civil war and its opposition to the United States.

Two events probably reminded Vietnam of its "historic" role in guiding Cambodia's KPRP. One was Pol Pot's antagonism to Vietnam, and the Cambodian attacks along the border that began in earnest in 1977. The other was Pol Pot's close alliance with China at a time when Sino-Vietnamese relations, nurtured for so long by Ho Chi Minh, had deteriorated badly. The opportunity to mount a strong attack on Cambodia, depose Pol Pot, and establish a sympathetic regime in Phnom Penh was apparently too good for the Vietnamese to miss, particularly since it fitted so well with an evolving "Indochinese" view, stressed by General Secretary Le Duan and others within the Vietnamese leadership.²²

It is difficult to say how the stalemate between Vietnam and Kampuchea, on the one hand, and the Pol Pot coalition, the ASEAN states and the larger powers, on the other, can be resolved. No power is strong enough, or interested enough, to force Vietnamese troops out of Cambodia and to prevent them from returning. None of the factions in the coalition seems likely to gather enough support inside Cambodia to weaken or topple the government, or to convince the Vietnamese to cut their losses and return to Vietnam. At the same time, it seems unlikely that the Vietnamese would be willing to dilute the Heng Samrin regime (about which they may entertain lingering doubts in any case) with nonsocialist elements in order to pull the teeth of ASEAN opposition.

For China unilaterally to cut off its aid to Democratic Kampuchea or for the Thai to refuse to allow Chinese aid to reach DK forces, they would have to see an alternative to continuing Vietnamese hegemony over Cambodia (a likely outcome) in their immediate interests. In other words, disarming Pol Pot might lead to significant Vietnamese troop withdrawals, but it would seem to offer a breathing space to the Heng Samrin regime and to Vietnamese control over Cambodian defense and foreign relations.

It may well be that, as time goes on, Vietnamese "love" for Cambodia will wear thin, and the necessity of continuing Vietnamese protection will become, for many

Cambodians, less persuasive. Certainly, more goodwill on the part of countries larger than Cambodia would be helpful, even though it has been lacking for many years. "Hurting" Vietnam remains in the interests of the United States and China (without costing them very much); recognizing Vietnamese hegemony over Cambodia (and thus allowing Vietnam to divert resources for its own development and to join the family of nations) is less appealing than encouraging Cambodians to kill each other, and some Vietnamese, in the name of "freedom." In the meantime, as the French correspondent Jacques Bekaert has written, "Solutions, if any, will probably take a long time. Long enough for a lot more people to die. Long enough to make anything possible."²³ ■

CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

(Continued from page 408)

powers in Asia. Its most serious conflict involved the Soviet Union, at least after 1969, when the two engaged in a war over an island in the Ussuri River. Subsequently, the Chinese perceived that (instead of continuing the dispute on the border) Moscow was building its naval and air power in Asia to surround and contain China. Soviet policies toward Vietnam, particularly those that gave the Kremlin basing rights, were seen by China as essential to Moscow's "anti-China strategy."

Beijing assailed Vietnam's decision to join the Soviet bloc's economic organization, CMEA (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance) in 1977 and condemned Vietnam's alliance with Moscow in 1978. Beijing subsequently charged that Hanoi would not have dared to invade Kampuchea without Soviet prompting and support. In brief, Chinese leaders identified Moscow with Vietnam's military actions against Kampuchea and with the defeat of Pol Pot.¹⁴

China's current economic pressure on Vietnam is intended to put pressure on the Soviet Union. So is its propaganda: China has made an issue of Vietnamese workers in Siberia, referred to in the Chinese media as "slave labor"; and it has condemned the alleged use of chemical weapons in Kampuchea and Laos.

Chinese leaders probably do not believe that they can make the economic costs of Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea too high for Moscow. Instead, they see (as most outsiders do) that Moscow is getting useful basing rights from Hanoi for a reasonable or cheap price, considering Moscow's goals. Thus China's appeal to the international community. Beijing apparently perceives that, by making the image cost high for Vietnam and the Soviet Union and by underscoring Moscow's niggardliness in terms of its aid to Vietnam and Vietnam's hapless economic conditions, it can win a propaganda victory. In terms of U.N. debates and influencing opinions in the third world, Chinese leaders have calculated correctly.

²¹Porter, *op. cit.*

²²Ralph B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War* (London, 1983), p. 129.

²³*Bangkok Post*, September 17, 1983.

¹⁴See Nguyen Manh Hung, "The Sino-Vietnamese Conflict: Power Play Among Communist Neighbors," *Asian Survey*, November, 1979, pp. 1037-1052.

During recent negotiations with the Soviet Union, Beijing mentioned three major problems: troops on the Sino-Soviet border; Moscow's aid to Hanoi that allows its occupation of Kampuchea; and the situation in Afghanistan. Chinese leaders have given some indication that a Soviet troop reduction and Soviet support for Hanoi are the matters of genuine concern (Afghanistan is primarily in dispute between Moscow and the West).

Chinese leaders have taken steps to allay ASEAN and American apprehension about Sino-Soviet talks and have apparently tied any Sino-Soviet agreement to a settlement of the problems in Southeast Asia. In any event, Sino-Soviet negotiations have so far proved fruitless.¹⁵

Relations with the United States regarding Southeast Asia have changed drastically and can now be categorized as very good, with certain caveats. The United States, once described as the imperialist archenemy, assumed a new role in Chinese foreign policy during the early 1970's. This had even more relevance vis-à-vis Southeast Asia after the United States left Vietnam in 1975. There was no longer any reason for China to oppose United States policies in the region and there was good reason to seek an alignment with Washington in the face of the Soviet and Soviet-Vietnamese threat there.

Subsequently, according to many observers, China became a willing surrogate or instrument of United States foreign policy in Southeast Asia. Beijing had the same or similar objectives, while the United States was trammled in terms of its foreign policy by the "Vietnam syndrome." Chinese leaders sought more help and tougher policies from the United States, but did not expect too much in terms of direct actions. Deng and his colleagues, however, were noticeably chagrined by United States President Jimmy Carter's reaction to its "teaching Vietnam a lesson" in 1979—an action that they perceived as executing United States foreign policy goals as well as their own.

During the past few years Beijing has quietly urged the United States to take a harder stance toward Hanoi and to serve as a go-between for China in its efforts to build closer ties with the ASEAN nations. China approves of and cooperates with Washington's economic pressure on Hanoi (which ironically has the support of virtually all Western countries—unlike similar United States policies in the 1970's). Beijing also sanctions United States military aid to Thailand and other ASEAN countries, including sophisticated fighter planes that are better than China's.

Chinese leaders have been happy with the Reagan administration's tough policies toward the Soviet Union

†Editor's note: For a different view of the Chinese reaction to President Reagan's policies, see Steven Goldstein, "Sino-American Relations," *Current History*, September, 1984.

¹⁵See Yu Sui, "Soviet Union Diplomacy Tends Toward Rigidity," *Beijing Review*, June 21, 1984, p. 11.

¹⁶"PRC Urges Reagan to Aid Kampuchean Resistance," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 21, 1984, p. 13.

and have lauded American efforts to counter Soviet military expansion in Asia—even though the focus of United States policy has not been on Southeast Asia.† However, Beijing has openly urged President Reagan to give more aid to the Kampuchean resistance groups.¹⁶ Apparently Chinese leaders view this as politically feasible for the United States and believe it would help cement unity among the coalition partners while bolstering Beijing's policy of a military solution in Kampuchea. United States aid would also serve as a link between Chinese efforts to help the resistance and ASEAN assistance to Son Sann and Sihanouk. A not frequently mentioned point of disagreement between Beijing and Washington regards the role of the Khmer Rouge if and when Vietnamese forces withdraw from Kampuchea. For the time being, the problem is ignored. Apparently, Chinese leaders think they can deal with the issue later.

China's stance toward Japan in the region is also a marked departure from the past. Chinese leaders used to view Japanese economic penetration of the region with suspicion and they frequently mentioned it in their propaganda. For a time, Beijing even tried to compete with Japanese exports. China also talked to Southeast Asians about a recrudescence of the Japanese military threat.

But as relations with the Soviet Union and the United States changed, so did Beijing's policies toward Japan. Now little or nothing is said about Japan's economic ties with the region (Japan being the number one or two trading partner of all ASEAN nations). Chinese leaders probably see Japan as offsetting Soviet influence or think that it would be hypocritical to comment since Japan is China's leading trading partner.

Recently, Chinese leaders have shown even more friendliness (or preference) toward Japan; they have tried to reassure Southeast Asian leaders with regard to Japan's military buildup. This is a new policy and represents a view in Beijing that Japan will not become a military threat in Southeast Asia and, temporarily at least, will help offset the larger Soviet military threat or will perhaps counterbalance the perception of a Chinese threat held by some Southeast Asian leaders, particularly in Malaysia and Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS

China's policies toward Southeast Asia are radically different from its past policies. Nonetheless, in terms of enhancing Chinese influence in the region, Beijing has not been very successful. Its trade with the countries of Southeast Asia remains insignificant (the entire region accounts for less than five percent of China's external commerce), and nowhere is China a political or economic development model. Furthermore, neither its troops nor its military bases would be welcomed anywhere in the region.

In preventing Hanoi or Moscow (or the combination) from dominating the area, Beijing has both succeeded and failed. It has managed to line up with the United

States (or line the United States up with China) to act with regard to the Soviet-Vietnamese "problem." Some optimism is justified; Beijing is improving its ties with the ASEAN bloc and expanding trade ties with the region. In both cases, however, unanticipated events could easily impede or reverse the progress made to date.

As a product of its Southeast Asia policies, China has improved its global image. The overwhelming majority of nations (not including the Soviet bloc) agree with Beijing that Vietnamese occupation troops must withdraw from Kampuchea and, to a lesser extent, they agree that Hanoi and Moscow are the aggressive hegemonist nations in the region. Chinese representatives are clearly on the winning side in U.N. debates on Kampuchea and on regular votes on the "Kampuchea issue." U.N. Kampuchean resolutions are as tough as China's policy statements. Moreover, the U.N. has not yet shown serious concern about the prospect that the Khmer Rouge may return to power if Vietnamese forces withdraw.

China also seems to be supporting the winning side in terms of fighting. The resistance forces are costing Vietnam so much that Hanoi will probably have to bid for a negotiated settlement or withdraw. Hanoi's position regarding the future of Kampuchea has softened in recent months. If and when negotiations become a serious matter, China is likely to see its "united front" with the United States and ASEAN weaken, because the role of the Khmer Rouge in a new government will be a divisive issue, and Hanoi will have some advantage vis-à-vis Beijing because of the Pol Pot issue.

On the other hand, Beijing's policies toward ASEAN seem to have considerable stability—even if either China or ASEAN seeks a rapprochement with Vietnam. If Moscow wants to keep its military foothold in the region, it will have to continue to support Hanoi economically and militarily (perhaps more than it does now); and this will make tension with the ASEAN nations inevitable. A more friendly Soviet stance toward ASEAN is not likely to bring significant or immediate results. All of this translates into a more meaningful regional role for China. ■

THAILAND

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signs that the King wanted his daughter to be next in the line of succession. Never in Thai history had a woman held such exalted rank.

Despite the criticism of the royal family (directed more often toward the Queen and Crown Prince than to the King), the monarchy is still a powerful institution, led by a King who is venerated and who has shown he will intervene in political affairs when he thinks intervention is necessary. At the same time, a legitimacy crisis affects the monarchy. One potential cause of instability in Thailand is the monarchy's increasingly ambiguous nature, in an era of rapid socioeconomic change.

In 1984, Thailand's security is not imminently threatened by any adversary. During the last two years, the

Thai government has continued its major foreign policies: alliance with the United States; improved relations with China; support for the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) containment of Soviet-backed Vietnam; and support for the ASEAN ideal of ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality) for Southeast Asia.

In April, 1984, when Prime Minister Prem met with United States President Ronald Reagan, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to Thai national security under the bilateral provisions of the Manila Pact and promised to upgrade Thailand's weaponry. President Reagan reiterated his desire not to become involved in military maneuvers against the Vietnamese in Kampuchea, and turned down an ASEAN request for direct (but covert) aid to the tripartite coalition of Cambodian rebels fighting against the Heng Samrin regime. However, the United States agreed to provide diplomatic support for ASEAN and Chinese attempts to pressure Vietnam to withdraw from Kampuchea.

The United States agrees with Thailand that Soviet-backed Vietnam, rather than China, is the major threat to the region. (Indonesia and Malaysia still view China as the main adversary.) Thailand and the United States do not oppose the present stalemate in Indochina, because the stalemate bleeds Vietnam and the Soviet Union and is compatible with China's desire to contain the Soviet Union. At present, American, Thai, and Chinese foreign policies coincide on this issue. All three seek to isolate Vietnam, support the Cambodian rebels against the Vietnamese puppet regime in Phnom Penh, and influence world opinion to denounce Soviet-Vietnamese aggression in Southeast Asia.

Opponents of the Thai and American position assert that Thai-American policy exacerbates cold war tensions; relies too much on the desire for cordial relations with China; pushes Vietnam into increased dependence on the Soviet Union; undermines Thailand's policy of neutrality; and forces the Soviet Union to buttress its naval facilities and to increase its support for Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea—precisely the opposite of what American policy is supposed to achieve. They suggest that a more conciliatory approach to Vietnam, including diplomatic relations and the offer of aid, might encourage Vietnam to reduce its presence in Kampuchea.

In response to this criticism, the Reagan administration maintains that relations with ASEAN members are excellent; that no serious crises threaten United States allies; that, in the long run, better relations with ASEAN, China and Japan are more important than good relations

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THE UNITED STATES AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

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States military assistance to Thailand since fiscal year 1979 reflects both United States support for Thailand's uncompromising stance toward Vietnam and the United

States desire to maintain its traditional role as patron of the Thai military. The total of United States military aid grants, credit arms sales and military training programs for Thailand has risen steadily from \$32 million in FY 1979 to \$105 million in FY 1985. The aid supports the modernization of the Thai army, although United States officials concede that it will be no match for the Vietnamese even when the program is completed.

The role of United States security assistance in the cultivation of political-military influence in Thailand is illustrated by the administration's response to Thailand's request to purchase a squadron of F-16 fighter planes, the latest model aircraft in the United States Air Force. Although the Carter administration avoided selling the F-16 to the ASEAN states because of its concern for the potentially destabilizing effects in the region, President Reagan assured Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanond when he visited Washington in April, 1984, that Thailand could have whatever system it chose, and that the time for repayment would be extended from 12 to 17 years. The administration asked the Thais to consider as an alternative the F-20 Tigershark, a lower-cost plane with "intermediate capabilities" planned specifically for export to non-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies, but the Thai military leadership rejected that suggestion.

Opposition to the Thai purchase of F-16's came from Thai economic and financial specialists, who pointed out that it would cost nearly \$1 billion for a squadron, nearly twice as much as the alternative, thus putting an unwarranted strain on the Thai budget. And there were concerns in the region that the Thai purchase of F-16's would put pressure on the other ASEAN states to upgrade their air forces, even though they had previously decided to forgo upgrading. Finally, as Malaysian Defense and Foreign Ministry officials pointed out, the United States decision to sell the F-16 to Thailand might well trigger a Soviet decision to provide its latest model MiG-23 to Vietnam.¹⁵

The administration's policy toward the conflict over Kampuchea has been to maintain the existing polarization of the region between the Soviet Union and Vietnam, on one hand, and a coalition of states including the United States, China and ASEAN, on the other. This policy does not promise to free Kampuchea from Vietnamese occupation or to reduce the Soviet military presence in Vietnam any time in the near future. But it is a

strategic alignment, however loose and contradictory, which is useful, in the administration's view, to its broader anti-Soviet strategy in East Asia.

The administration's declaratory policy expresses the desire for a negotiated political settlement, emphasizes support for ASEAN's approach to the problem, and pledges that it will not support the restoration of the Communist Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot to power in Kampuchea. The declaratory policy further asserts that the United States does not seek "permanent hostility to Vietnam" and would end its economic boycott and reconsider its nonrecognition of the Hanoi regime if Vietnam would withdraw its forces from Kampuchea under an ASEAN-sponsored peace plan.¹⁶

In practice, however, the imperatives of the administration's anti-Soviet strategy have nullified its expressed support for a compromise settlement in Kampuchea. President Reagan and his first secretary of state, Alexander Haig, believed that China could be a useful counterweight to Soviet global power, and that the introduction of capitalist economics into China could be a major factor in stabilizing East Asia. So the cultivation of close political and military ties with China was a major objective of President Reagan's foreign policy. Differences over Taiwan created new tensions between the administration and China, moreover; and Kampuchea loomed even larger as a strategic issue on which the two governments could cooperate. When Haig met with Chinese officials in Beijing in June, 1981, he reportedly agreed that Vietnam should be weakened by prolonging the Kampuchean conflict and gradually strangling Vietnam through an economic boycott. In the end, Haig and the Chinese agreed, Vietnam would be forced to give up both its role in Kampuchea and its alliance with the Soviet Union.¹⁷

The United States tendency to use the Kampuchea conflict to weaken Vietnam was further reinforced by China and Thailand's close collaboration in supplying the Pol Pot guerrillas in Kampuchea. Thailand has also followed the Chinese lead diplomatically, ruling out any compromise that would exclude the Chinese-supported Khmer Rouge from a Kampuchean settlement.¹⁸ So the Reagan administration has been able to cite the requirements of Thai security as the primary consideration in formulating its policy toward Kampuchea.

What the Reagan administration has consistently referred to publicly as support for ASEAN's approach to the Kampuchea conflict has in fact been support for the approach taken by China, Thailand and Singapore. Those three states, along with the United States, have demanded that Hanoi agree to withdraw from Kampuchea without any assurances of security for the Phnom Penh government of Heng Samrin. Malaysia and Indonesia, meanwhile, have sought to bring pressure on Thailand to be more flexible on the terms for a settlement, especially on the key question of the Communist Khmer Rouge. The Malay states fear that prolonging the war in Kampuchea strengthens Chinese and Soviet influence

¹⁵*Bangkok Nation*, June 10, 1984; *South China Morning Post*, June 19, 1984.

¹⁶See *U.S. Policy Toward Indochina Since Vietnam's Occupation of Kampuchea*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Asia and Pacific Affairs, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, 1981, pp. 169-191.

¹⁷Nayan Chanda, "Haig Turns the Screw," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 26, 1981, pp. 10-11.

¹⁸For details, see Gareth Porter, "ASEAN and Kampuchea: Shadow and Substance," *Indochina Issues*, no. 14 (February, 1981), pp. 5-6.

and risks military confrontation between Thailand and Vietnam.¹⁹

Malaysian and Indonesian pressures for a more acceptable ASEAN position resulted in an ASEAN draft resolution for the 1981 International Kampuchea Conference, intended to signal ASEAN disapproval of a Khmer Rouge return to power. It called for disarming all Khmer factions and establishing an interim administration to replace the Khmer Rouge regime (which was then still seated by the United Nations General Assembly as representative of Kampuchea). Although the proposal did not begin to deal with the problem of disarming between 25,000 and 40,000 guerrilla troops, it was rejected by the Chinese delegation as an attack on the legitimacy of the Khmer Rouge regime. The United States took a neutral stance, urging ASEAN to compromise rather than risk an open display of disunity in the anti-Vietnamese international coalition. ASEAN officials (including even the usually hard-line Singaporeans) felt the Reagan administration had betrayed ASEAN by giving priority to China.

The creation in 1982 of the "loose coalition" Khmer resistance government, bringing together Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea, Prince Norodom Sihanouk (former ruler of Cambodia) and former Cambodian Prime Minister Son Sann's "Khmer People's National Liberation Front" (KPNLF), helped the Reagan administration reconcile its interest in strategic cooperation with China against the Soviet Union and Vietnam with its decision to support ASEAN. ASEAN's support for the coalition concealed two very different motives. For Malaysia, the coalition offered an opportunity to give legitimacy and material assistance to the non-Communist "Third Force" in Kampuchea. This would make the Third Force a logical candidate for inclusion in an eventual coalition government with the Vietnamese-supported regime in Phnom Penh—a coalition that would exclude the Khmer Rouge. But for Thailand and Singapore, the coalition offered a way to give a more acceptable facade to the Khmer Rouge, to avoid the erosion of support for the seating of the Pol Pot regime at the United Nations, and to maintain unity within ASEAN.

The Reagan administration welcomed the formation of the loose coalition, but it showed no interest in making the non-Communist resistance the key to a negotiated settlement. In 1983, the administration publicly ruled out the option of military assistance to the KPNLF, arguing that a major increase in the resistance effort in Kampuchea would not significantly increase the chances for a political settlement. But at the same time, the administration refused publicly to exclude Pol Pot's political-military apparatus, which is still hated and feared by the Khmer population, from a role in postwar Kampuchea. "As long as [Kampuchea] is a military problem," explained a

United States official in 1983, "the Khmer Rouge are the strongest force." In keeping the Khmer Rouge as an essential part of its strategy, the United States was siding with the Chinese and the Thais on the key issue in Kampuchea.

United States officials have argued that, if there were free elections in Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge would obviously lose. But no free elections could occur so long as Khmer Rouge troops can control the countryside. And the ASEAN proposal that an international peacekeeping force can replace the Vietnamese military presence to disarm the Khmer Rouge draws approximately the same response from Vietnam that a proposal to replace the United States Army in Vietnam with Swedes, Indonesians and Senegalese would have drawn from the United States during the Vietnam War. Working-level officials admitted early in the Reagan administration that a large peacekeeping force was not seriously contemplated by the ASEAN states, and that an agreement would probably have to be "self-enforcing."

Malaysia and Indonesia have recognized that ASEAN cannot demand the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, because such a withdrawal would give the Khmer Rouge an opportunity to return to power. They have argued within ASEAN for a compromise settlement that would involve a partial Vietnamese withdrawal, allowing the Vietnamese to maintain security in return for a Vietnamese agreement to a United Nations-supervised free election. Malaysia and Indonesia would also like the United States to assume a diplomatic role in the conflict independent of China, and would like the United States to press Beijing to negotiate directly with Vietnam.

Hanoi has demanded that security guarantees against Chinese military pressure and subversion in all three Indochinese countries be part of a negotiated settlement. China, however, has rejected any agreement with Vietnam on bilateral relations until after Vietnamese troops have been withdrawn from Kampuchea. Again, the Reagan administration has avoided the issue, tacitly supporting China's diplomatic position.

American officials and defenders of ASEAN's uncompromising policy toward Vietnam and Kampuchea have argued that there is no reason to reach an early agreement with Hanoi, since the status quo in Kampuchea imposes high costs on Vietnam without any cost to the United States or the ASEAN states. But the costs and risks of the present policy are substantial, even if they cannot be counted in dollars. They include the possibility of a major Vietnamese thrust into Thailand in order to destroy Pol Pot's forces; the possibility that the Soviet military presence in Vietnam will become permanent, comparable to the United States presence in the Philippines; and the loss of an opportunity to integrate Vietnam into the emerging Pacific economic order and to reduce the likelihood of Vietnam's conflict with its neighbors. If the Reagan administration has been relatively indifferent to these risks, it is because its strategic priorities lie elsewhere. ■

¹⁹Sheldon Simon, "Two Southeast Asias and China: Security Perspectives," *Asian Survey*, May, 1984, pp. 527-528.

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

A Current History chronology covering the most important events of October, 1984, to provide a day-by-day summary of world affairs.

INTERNATIONAL

Contadora Group

Oct. 17—The 4 members of the Contadora Group meet in Madrid to refine their Central American peace plan, taking into account objections made by other countries in the area and by the United States.

Iran-Iraq War

Oct. 8—Launching a missile attack on a Liberian-registered tanker near Iran's Kharg Island, Iraqi planes kill 6 tanker crewmen.

Oct. 12—An Iranian plane attacks an Indian oil tanker, the 47th ship to be damaged this year in the Persian Gulf.

Oct. 13—A Panamanian-registered ship is attacked and left ablaze by unidentified planes in the Persian Gulf.

Oct. 18—Iranian forces launch what Iran calls a major offensive against Iraqi positions in its central border region.

Oct. 25—Iraq claims the destruction of 4 Iranian ships in the Persian Gulf.

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

(See also *Nigeria*)

Oct. 29—Meeting in emergency session in Geneva, the oil ministers of the OPEC countries agree to cut oil production by 1.5 million barrels a day.

Oct. 31—After 2½ days of meetings in Geneva, OPEC oil ministers itemize production cuts for OPEC members; Nigeria and Iraq's production are untouched while Saudi Arabia's production is cut 647,000 barrels a day.

United Nations (UN)

Oct. 2—Addressing the General Assembly, Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega Saaavedra charges that the U.S. plans to invade Nicaragua on October 15 to prevent the holding of elections there in November.

Oct. 5—Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Karami asks the UN to help arrange a "total Israeli withdrawal" from Lebanon.

Oct. 11—The general debate period of the UN General Assembly ends.

Oct. 12—The World Court settles a 20-year-old maritime boundary dispute between the U.S. and Canada by giving the U.S. two-thirds of the Gulf of Maine and the Georges Bank fishing grounds and giving Canada one-third of the area.

Oct. 22—4 new members, Australia, Denmark, Trinidad and Tobago, and Thailand, are named to the 15-member Security Council for 2-year terms; the U.S., the Soviet Union, Britain, France and China are permanent members.

Oct. 23—The Security Council votes 14 to 0 (with the U.S. abstaining) to adopt a resolution condemning South African apartheid policies and detentions.

Oct. 30—The General Assembly votes 110 to 22 with 18 abstentions to ask Vietnam to withdraw its forces from Cambodia.

Oct. 31—UN officials report that Israeli and Lebanese military groups will meet in southern Lebanon on October 5 to discuss Israel's withdrawal from the region.

AFGHANISTAN

(See also *France*)

Oct. 9—Western diplomats in New Delhi, India, report that the Soviet Union may have sent 70,000 new troops into Afghanistan in order to stop attacks by rebels in Kabul.

Oct. 20—A French newspaper reporter leaves for Paris after the government releases him; he was to serve an 18-year prison sentence.

ANGOLA

Oct. 22—Government radio reports that Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge was dismissed from his post yesterday by President José Eduardo dos Santos.

ARGENTINA

Oct. 4—The federal court in Buenos Aires rules that 9 members of the military junta that ruled Argentina will be tried in civilian courts.

Oct. 18—In Rome, Argentine and Chilean officials sign an agreement that resolves a territorial dispute over islands in the Beagle Channel, a waterway between the 2 countries.

Oct. 21—Former Montonero guerrilla leader Mario Firmenich is extradited from Brazil; he faces kidnapping and murder charges.

BAHAMAS

Oct. 9—The government reports that 3 Cabinet ministers resigned and 2 were dismissed yesterday after they were linked to drug dealing.

BANGLADESH

Oct. 14—In Dhaka, over 500,000 people attend rallies demanding an end to martial law.

Oct. 27—The military government announces that parliamentary elections scheduled for December have been postponed indefinitely; this is the 2d postponement of elections this year.

BOLIVIA

Oct. 29—President Hernán Siles Zuazo ends his 5-day-old hunger strike; Siles Zuazo began the strike to protest Congress's censure of his anti-narcotics program.

CANADA

(See also *Intl., UN; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 9—Ontario Premier William Davis announces that he will resign his post as soon as a new premier is selected at a party convention in January.

Oct. 16—After talks with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, External Affairs Minister Joe Clark says that the U.S. and Canada have opened "a new chapter" in relations.

Oct. 29—Workers at 13 General Motors automobile plants in Canada end their 4-week strike after they ratify a new contract.

Oct. 30—Minister of Industry Sinclair Stevens announces that the Canadian government is selling several state-owned corporations.

CHAD

- Oct. 5—President Hissen Habré meets with French President François Mitterrand in Paris.
- Oct. 28—In Brazzaville, Congo, negotiations between rebels and the government break down after President Habré demands that all warring factions recognize him as the legitimate head of the government.

CHILE(See also *Argentina*)

- Oct. 10—7 opposition leaders, including the heads of the Christian Democratic, Social Democratic and Radical parties, are released from jail; they were arrested yesterday for organizing protests against the military government last month.
- Oct. 24—General René Vidal, the military commander of Santiago, announces new government regulations that restrict press reporting of anti-government demonstrations.
- Oct. 29—The military government sends 140 people into internal exile; last night bombs went off in Santiago and 4 provincial capitals.
- Oct. 30—Strikes are held throughout Chile to protest the government's refusal to return to democracy.
- Oct. 31—Roman Catholic Church officials in Santiago criticize the government's killing of 8 protesters and the wounding of 25 in the last 2 days. The government announces the internal exile of 43 more people.

CHINA

- Oct. 3—China's de facto leader, Deng Xiaoping, assures a delegation of visitors from Hong Kong that China will abide by the terms of the agreement on Hong Kong it signed on September 26.
- Oct. 16—A U.S. Army military training group arrives in Beijing to inspect Chinese military facilities.
- Oct. 18—The 5th round of talks with representatives from the Soviet Union opens in Beijing.
- Oct. 20—The Foreign Ministry announces that the Communist party's Central Committee has approved a large-scale reform plan that moves toward a free-market economy, ending some consumer subsidies, and allowing the prices of a large number of commodities to be determined by supply and demand, rather than by government guidelines.

COSTA RICA

- Oct. 2—U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica Curtin Winsor Jr. says that Nicaragua is like an "infected piece of meat, attracting insects from all over."

EGYPT(See also *Libya*)

- Oct. 1—The government announces that it is canceling an increase in food prices after food riots have left 13 people dead in the city of Kafr el Dawar.
- Oct. 2—President Hosni Mubarak accuses Libya of planning to attack the Aswan Dam and the Suez Canal.
- Oct. 9—Mubarak arrives in Jordan; he is the 1st Egyptian leader to visit an Arab country since Egypt was ostracized for signing a peace treaty with Israel.

EL SALVADOR

- Oct. 6—In an interview with *The New York Times*, U.S. Undersecretary of Defense Fred C. Iklé says that if recent developments continue, the Salvadoran military will get the insurgents "under control." In the same interview, other military officials say that the guerrillas could be eliminated by 1986.
- Oct. 7—Defense Minister Eugenio Vides Casanova tells re-

porters that El Salvador has about 25 napalm bombs; he thinks none of them have been used.

- Oct. 8—In a speech at the UN, President José Napoleón Duarte offers to hold peace talks with guerrilla leaders in the town of La Palma on October 15.
- Oct. 10—In San Salvador, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz says that the U.S. is "delighted to support" Duarte's peace initiative.
- Oct. 15—Talks between Duarte and political and military leaders of the guerrillas are held for 4½ hours; in a communiqué, the 2 sides say a commission will be set up to study ways "to humanize" the war. Both sides agree to meet again, but do not set a date.
- Oct. 19—4 U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employees are killed when their plane crashes outside San Salvador; the U.S. government says that plane was on a surveillance mission.
- Oct. 23—Lieutenant Colonel Domingo Monterrosa and 14 other people are killed when their helicopter crashes; Monterrosa was considered the Salvadoran army's best military commander.

ETHIOPIA(See *U.S., Foreign Policy*)**FRANCE**(See also *Afghanistan; Chad; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

- Oct. 23—The French Communist party cuts ties with the ruling Communist party in Afghanistan to protest the jailing of a French news reporter.
- Oct. 24—President François Mitterrand delivers a speech before the British Parliament calling on the U.S. and the Soviet Union to begin arms control talks immediately.

GERMANY, EAST(See also *Germany, West*)

- Oct. 5—U.S. Secretary of State Shultz says he held "warm and cordial" talks with East German Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer in New York yesterday; this was the first foreign minister-level talk between the 2 countries since 1978.

GERMANY, WEST(See also *Romania*)

- Oct. 1—Results from yesterday's municipal elections show that the Green party won 8.6 percent of the vote, compared to 2 percent in the last local elections.
- Oct. 5—The government says that 80 East Germans have entered the West German embassy in Prague; the embassy closed its doors yesterday to keep out any more refugees.
- Oct. 24—Speaker of the Parliament Rainer Barzel resigns after he is accused of taking \$500,000 from the Flick holding company for giving up the leadership of the Christian Democratic party to Kohl in 1973.

GREECE

- Oct. 2—Government spokesman Dimitris Maroudas says that Greek and American crewmen will begin flying U.S. AWACS reconnaissance planes over Greece next year; the planes will "control the airspace over Greece."
- Oct. 17—Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou tells a news conference that he told visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle that U.S. policy toward Turkey endangers U.S.-Greek ties.

GRENADA

- Oct. 16—19 people accused of murdering Prime Minister Maurice Bishop are brought to trial; the defendants tell the court that they do not recognize its jurisdiction.

Oct. 26—Former delegate to the Organization of American States Dessima Williams is arrested in Washington, D.C., by U.S. immigration officials after she gives a speech critical of U.S. policy toward the Caribbean; U.S. officials say she was arrested because she was in the U.S. without legal status.

HONDURAS

Oct. 8—Foreign Minister Edgardo Paz Barnica says the Honduran government is trying to deemphasize its military relations with the U.S. and wants more U.S. economic aid.

INDIA

Oct. 21—Several opposition groups meet to form a new party, the Dalit Mazdoor Kisan, to be led by former Prime Minister Charan Singh.

Oct. 28—Tamil Nadu State Finance Minister U.R. Nedunchezian calls on residents of the state to stop committing self-immolation out of concern for the health of the state's hospitalized chief minister, M.G. Ramachandran.

Oct. 31—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated by 2 Sikh members of her bodyguard. Later in the day Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister's son, is sworn in as the new Prime Minister.

IRAN

(See *Intl, Iran-Iraq War; Lebanon*)

IRAQ

(See also *Intl, Iran-Iraq War*)

Oct. 12—President Saddam Hussein is quoted by an Arabic-language newspaper in Paris as saying that he is ready to consider the reestablishment of relations with the U.S.

ISRAEL

(See also *Intl, UN; Jordan; Lebanon; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 2—The government announces a 6-month ban on the import of 50 "luxury" items in order to conserve foreign currency.

Oct. 7—Unnamed Israeli government officials say that Israel is willing to withdraw from Lebanon in return for a "non-written" commitment by Syria to keep its forces in place and prohibit the infiltration of Palestinian guerrillas into southern Lebanon.

Oct. 8—Prime Minister Shimon Peres meets with U.S. Secretary of State Shultz; he asks for an increase in economic aid from the U.S.

Oct. 28—Israeli terrorists kill 1 Arab and wound 10 others when they fire an antitank rocket at a crowded bus in Jerusalem.

ITALY

Oct. 26—Judge Ilario Martella tells a news conference that he will try 3 Bulgarians and 4 Turks for complicity in the attempted murder of Pope John Paul II on May 13, 1981; he also asserts that the Pope was shot by 2 gunmen, not just 1. The judge says that he will not press charges against 6 men accused of plotting to kill Lech Walesa, the head of the banned labor union Solidarity.

JAPAN

Oct. 31—Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone names a new Cabinet; earlier in the day he was elected to a 2d term as president of his Liberal Democratic party.

JORDAN

(See also *Egypt*)

Oct. 1—King Hussein tells the opening session of the Jordanian Parliament that Israel's recent call for Jordan and other

Arab states to begin peace negotiations was "an exercise in subterfuge and deception." He also criticizes the U.S. for "procrastination and hesitancy" in its Middle East policy.

KAMPUCHEA

(See *Intl, UN*)

LEBANON

(See also *Intl, UN; Israel; U.S., Foreign Policy, Legislation*)

Oct. 4—U.S. intelligence forces in Washington, D.C., report that they believe the group that bombed the U.S. embassy last month is called the Hezbollah, the party of God. Some of the explosives used by the group are said to have come from Iran.

Oct. 5—Prime Minister Rashid Karami says Lebanon will not hold direct talks with Israel about the removal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon; he would like to see the U.S. act as an intermediary.

Oct. 21—Diplomatic sources in Beirut report that 26 U.S. embassy employees have left Beirut in the last 2 days. Terrorists have threatened to attack a U.S. position before the November 6 U.S. election.

Oct. 25—A U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee report finds that the September bombing of the U.S. embassy could have been prevented except for the "tragically simple mistake" of not blocking the access road leading to the building.

LIBYA

(See also *Egypt; Sudan*)

Oct. 4—The government denies Egyptian allegations that Libya planned to bomb the Aswan Dam and blockade the Suez Canal.

MOZAMBIQUE

(See *South Africa*)

NICARAGUA

(See also *Intl, UN; Costa Rica; U.S., Foreign Policy, Legislation*)

Oct. 19—Edgar Chamorro, a director of the largest Nicaraguan guerrilla group, says there was only 1 draft of a CIA manual on guerrilla warfare that instructed rebels to "neutralize" political targets and that about 2,000 copies were distributed; this contradicts U.S. government officials.

Oct. 20—Chamorro tells reporters that his forces have killed Sandinista officials because some Sandinistas are "tyrants"; a secret U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) report recently released noted that guerrillas were committing political assassinations as early as 1982.

Oct. 21—The Independent Liberal party announces that it will not take part in the November 4 elections because of unfair Sandinista practices.

Oct. 22—The opposition paper *La Prensa* does not publish today's edition after the government censors 10 articles; 6 articles deal with the Liberal Independent party's decision to withdraw from the elections.

Oct. 24—Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega criticizes the government for not sincerely seeking peace and for promoting and institutionalizing violence.

Oct. 31—In an interview with *The New York Times*, Chamorro says that the CIA told him 2 years ago that, "We are going to help you change the government in Managua and do it within a year."

NIGERIA

Oct. 17—Nigeria cuts the price of its oil by \$2 a barrel; it is the 1st member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to break with the official price structure set by the group.

PAKISTAN

Oct. 8—President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq says that opposition political parties will not be allowed to function after elections that are promised for next month.

PANAMA

Oct. 11—Nicolás Ardito Barletta is sworn in as President of Panama; he promises a "functional and representative democracy."

PHILIPPINES

Oct. 2—Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin calls on professionals and business leaders to join demonstrations against the government of President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Oct. 5—Marcos says Cardinal Sin is violating the separation of church and state by advocating attendance at demonstrations.

Oct. 7—About 20,000 people demonstrate against the Marcos government in Manila; many of the demonstrators are businessmen.

Oct. 23—The 5-member commission investigating the 1983 assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. reports that Aquino's murder was a military plot; Chief of the Armed Forces Fabian C. Ver is implicated in the majority report; a minority report does not implicate Ver.

Oct. 24—Ver begins a temporary leave of absence.

POLAND

(See also *Italy*)

Oct. 2—The government accuses the Roman Catholic Church of using religion for political purposes.

Oct. 26—Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski condemns the abduction of a priest on October 19; the priest championed the cause of the banned labor union Solidarity. The government says 3 Interior Ministry officials have been arrested in the disappearance of the Reverend Jerzy Popieluszko.

Oct. 27—Interior Minister Czeslaw Kiszczak announces that an Interior Ministry policeman has confessed to killing Popieluszko.

Oct. 30—Popieluszko's body is found; a government spokesman says the killing is a plot against the government.

ROMANIA

Oct. 15—Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu arrives in Bonn for talks with Chancellor Helmut Kohl; Ceausescu is the 1st Warsaw Pact official to visit West Europe since the end of arms control talks between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in 1983.

SOUTH AFRICA

(See also *Intl, UN*)

Oct. 3—Foreign Minister Roelof F. Botha announces that an agreement has been reached with Mozambique whereby South Africa will oversee the implementation of a cease-fire between the Mozambican government and rightist guerrillas.

Oct. 4—The U.S. embassy in Pretoria announces that it will not allow 6 political refugees sanctuary in the embassy because they do not face "imminent bodily harm"; the 5 Indians and 1 black face detention without trial for opposing the August elections that granted limited political participation to Indians and mixed-race people.

Oct. 16—Bishop Desmond Tutu, the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, is named the winner of the 1984 Nobel peace prize; Tutu supports a nonviolent campaign to end the government's policy of apartheid.

Oct. 23—7,000 army troops and police enter the black township of Sebokeng and arrest about 350 blacks.

SPAIN

Oct. 9—Prime Minister Felipe González and labor representatives sign an agreement that holds wages below the inflation rate and makes it easier to dismiss employees.

SUDAN

Oct. 29—Government radio reports that security forces have thwarted an army coup attempt allegedly backed by Libya.

SYRIA

(See also *Israel*)

Oct. 15—President Hafez Assad arrives in Moscow for 3 days of talks.

UNITED KINGDOM

Great Britain

(See also *France*)

Oct. 3—The Labor party votes to expel U.S. nuclear weapons and to dismantle the British nuclear arsenal.

Oct. 10—A London judge rules that the coal miners' union is in contempt of court for continuing to strike after he found the strike not "official"; the judge fines the union \$250,000.

Oct. 12—The Irish Republican Army takes responsibility for the bombing of a Brighton hotel housing Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her Cabinet during the annual Conservative party convention; 2 Conservative party members are killed and 34 are wounded in the bombing.

U.S.S.R.

(See also *Afghanistan; China; Syria; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 2—3 cosmonauts return to earth after spending a record 237 days in space.

President Konstantin Chernenko meets with the President of South Yemen, Ali Nasser Mohammed, in Moscow.

October. 9—Chernenko and North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh sign a 20-year treaty of friendship; Moscow also has a 20-year friendship treaty with South Yemen.

Viktor G. Afanasyev, the chief editor of the Communist party paper *Pravda*, reportedly tells a Japanese reporter that Mikhail Gorbachev, a party secretary in the Secretariat of the Central Committee, is a "second general secretary" of the party.

Oct. 12—The Foreign Ministry denies a report by U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger that the Soviet Union has increased the number of SS-20 intermediate-range nuclear missiles aimed at West Europe.

Oct. 13—The Defense Ministry announces that it has begun deployment of long-range cruise missiles on bombers and submarines; it says the deployment is a response to the June deployments of U.S. cruise missiles on ships.

Oct. 16—In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Chernenko says progress on talks on space weapons and a nuclear weapons freeze would bring about better relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Oct. 20—The Soviet press agency Tass denies U.S. accusations that it has violated arms control agreements.

UNITED STATES

Administration

Oct. 1—Secretary of Labor Raymond J. Donovan is indicted by a federal grand jury in New York on charges of grand larceny and maintaining false business documents; he asks and receives an immediate leave of absence from his Cabinet post to defend himself.

Oct. 2—The Environmental Protection Agency proposes to add 244 new sites to its list of the nation's most hazardous waste-dumping sites.

Secretary Donovan enters a not guilty plea to the 137-

count indictment that has been filed against him.

Oct. 9—President Ronald Reagan says that he opposes cuts in Social Security benefits for both current and "future recipients."

Oct. 10—The Department of Health and Human Services reports that in 1983 U.S. citizens spent 10.8 percent of the gross national product (GNP), \$355.4 billion, for health care.

Oct. 13—The Agriculture Department reports that U.S. farmers received \$9.3 billion in direct U.S. subsidies in 1983.

Oct. 24—A Social Security spokesman announces that benefits will rise some 3.5 percent in January, 1985.

The government reports that because the consumer price index has risen 4.2 percent in the last 12 months, standard deduction and tax brackets on the federal income tax will be increased by 4.1 percent.

Economy

Oct. 5—The Labor Department reports that the nation's unemployment rate remained virtually unchanged at 7.3 percent in September.

Oct. 12—The Labor Department reports that its producer price index declined 0.2 percent in September.

Oct. 19—The Commerce Department reports that the nation's gross national product (GNP) grew at the annual rate of 2.7 percent from July through September.

Oct. 24—The Labor Department reports that its consumer price index rose 0.4 percent in September.

Oct. 26—Most major banks reduce their prime rate to 12 percent.

Oct. 31—The Commerce Department reports that its index of leading economic indicators rose 0.4 percent in September.

The Commerce Department reports that the nation's foreign trade deficit was \$12.6 billion in September.

Foreign Policy

(See also *Intl*, *Contadora*, *UN*; *Canada*; *China*; *Costa Rica*; *El Salvador*; *Germany, East*; *Germany, West*; *Greece*; *Grenada*; *Honduras*; *Iraq*; *Israel*; *Jordan*; *Lebanon*; *Nicaragua*; *South Africa*; *U.K.*, *Great Britain*; *U.S.S.R.*)

Oct. 2—The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports the arrest of Samuel L. Morrison, a U.S. Navy analyst, on charges of selling a classified photograph to *Jane's Defense Weekly*, a British journal.

President Reagan reiterates that he accepts full responsibility for the September bombing at the U.S. embassy in Beirut.

Oct. 3—In California, the FBI announces the arrest of an FBI agent and 2 Soviet emigrés on charges of espionage.

Oct. 9—After 2 days of meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, President Reagan says that the U.S. will "cooperate the best way we can" to aid Israel's economy. He promises to make available at once the \$1.2 billion in economic aid just approved by Congress.

Oct. 10—An excerpted version of a report of the General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament is released by the White House; it charges many serious violations of arms control agreements by the Soviet Union.

Oct. 13—Secretary of State George Shultz reports that security at U.S. embassies has been tightened "tremendously."

Oct. 14—After the Associated Press obtains a photostatic copy of a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) manual for Nicaraguan rebels, CIA intelligence officials admit that the agency produced the manual, which suggests assassinations and kidnappings as techniques for "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla War."

Oct. 17—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announces a joint pact with the Soviet Union, France and Canada dealing with their continued joint effort to use space satellites for air and sea rescues.

Oct. 18—President Reagan orders 2 different investigations of the conduct of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in preparing the manual on terrorist techniques for Nicaraguan rebels.

Oct. 25—The Agency for International Development reports that the U.S. will provide \$45 million in food aid to Ethiopia to help the 6 million victims of famine in that country.

Labor and Industry

Oct. 14—Negotiators for the United Auto Workers and the Ford Motor Company reach agreement on a new labor contract; the UAW also reports that 57.4 percent of the union's General Motors Corporation members have approved their new contract.

Oct. 29—UAW workers at the Ford Motor Company approve the new labor contract.

Legislation

Oct. 1—The House and Senate agree to extend present spending levels for government agencies until midnight October 5 in order to avert a shutdown of government services.

In a drive for adjournment, the House suspends normal procedures and passes 20 bills; debate is limited and all amendments are blocked.

Oct. 3—The House Select Committee on Intelligence finds that "there is no logical explanation for the lack of effective security" at the U.S. embassy in Beirut, which was bombed in September.

Oct. 5—On a voice vote, the Senate completes congressional action on a 4-year program regulating the handling and disposal of hazardous wastes.

Oct. 9—President Reagan signs the so-called "Baby Doe" legislation, which requires states receiving federal funds to fight child abuse to set guidelines forcing medical treatment for infants born deformed or fatally handicapped.

President Reagan signs legislation that will make it more difficult to bar disabled persons from Social Security disability benefits.

The House votes 386 to 0 and the Senate passes in a voice vote an omnibus trade bill that continues preferential treatment for 140 third world countries, provides for a free-trade agreement with Israel that may eventually eliminate tariffs between the 2 countries, and includes other provisions affecting wine and steel imports.

The House votes 363 to 1 to complete congressional action on a bill giving manufacturers of complex silicon chips short-term copyright protection.

President Reagan again vetoes a bill providing funds for 1987-1989 for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Oct. 11—The House votes 252 to 60 and the Senate votes 78 to 11 to pass a \$470-billion spending bill that includes a 5-month ban on further aid to Nicaraguan rebels, \$292.9 billion for the Defense Department, appropriations for anti-crime measures and \$18.2 billion in foreign aid, including \$128.5 million for El Salvador, \$1.2 billion in aid and \$1.4 billion in military grants (not loans) for Israel, and \$1.18 billion in similar military grants for Egypt.

By voice votes, the Senate and House pass legislation banning all local regulation of the cable television industry.

Oct. 12—Voting 37 to 30, the Senate completes congressional action on a bill increasing the U.S. debt limit by \$251 billion to \$1.824 trillion.

President Reagan signs the \$470-billion spending bill.

The 98th Congress completes its session.

Oct. 14—President Reagan signs legislation that requires more explicit health warnings on cigarette packages and in cigarette advertising.

Oct. 30—President Reagan pocket vetoes a bill providing \$225

million for an American Conservation Corps that would have provided summer jobs and programs of work and training for young people on public lands.

President Reagan signs more than 60 bills passed in the last days of the 98th Congress; among them are the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984, a bill establishing a policy for the regulation of cable television, and a bill designating several large tracts of National Forest Service land as wilderness areas.

Politics

Oct. 7—In Louisville, President Ronald Reagan and Democratic contender Walter Mondale engage in the first of their 2 scheduled television debates.

Oct. 11—In Philadelphia, Vice President George Bush and Democratic contender Geraldine Ferraro debate on national television.

Oct. 21—In Kansas City, President Reagan and Walter Mondale debate foreign policy in the 2d and last of their televised debates.

Science and Space

Oct. 13—The space shuttle Challenger lands at Cape Canaveral after 8 days in space.

Supreme Court

Oct. 1—The Supreme Court opens its new term.

VIETNAM

(See *Intl, UN*)

YEMEN, NORTH

(See *U.S.S.R.*)

YEMEN, SOUTH

(See *U.S.S.R.*)

BURMA

(Continued from page 431)

the black market of illegally imported goods, make it imperative that the ruler or rulers of Burma seek a new solution to this long-standing problem.

Finally, there is a similar war going on against the Shans, the Kachins and other minority groups. In each case, those in revolt seek political independence or autonomy. The war against the Shans is complicated because they are divided into rival factions, and at least one faction is more concerned with the opium trade than with politics.

Since the end of World War II and the British decision to leave Burma, the minority struggles have been increasing. The preservation of their culture and way of life, the right to control ancestral lands, and the fear of Burmanization lead the minorities to fight on in what seem like hopeless wars. Although they do not seek the overthrow of the Rangoon government, the minorities demand a rewriting of the 1974 constitution. Under Ne Win, the constitution is not debatable. If his successors maintain this attitude, the ethnic revolts will not be resolved. If, on the other hand, the claims of the minorities are to be considered, a strong leader will be required, a leader who can bring about constitutional change in the face of strong

interest in the status quo. It will also require a diversion of economic development resources to the hills and less developed regions of the minorities and away from the areas of Burman dominance.

Clearly the new leader or leaders of Burma face pressing issues. After 22 years of Ne Win's leadership, Burma is still plagued by some of the problems Ne Win inherited from his predecessors as well as those he created. If his successors try to continue along the path he laid out, economic decline and internal warfare will continue to plague the nation. A new course will not automatically solve its pressing problems. The course may be found only after further trial and error. But many of Burma's problems are well-known. Decisions, which have been put off this long, may be delayed a little longer, but not forever. ■

THAILAND

(Continued from page 436)

with Vietnam; that the Soviet Union must be contained; and that ASEAN, more than ever, is taking a leadership role in Southeast Asia, thereby allowing the United States to reduce its involvement.

Thailand's movement away from the American center stage does not mean that the United States considers the region irrelevant. On the contrary, the Reagan administration counts on the fact that Thailand, America's principal ally in Southeast Asia, is enjoying sustained economic growth and development, political stability, and security from outside intervention.

In 1984, the Thai government made a formal request to the United States for a squadron of F-16 fighter jets. The request may breed tension in United States and Thai relations because American policymakers do not favor it. They believe that the planes are too expensive (the total bill would be more than \$500 million) and that this money could be put to better use. The planes require highly trained pilots and maintenance technicians. Moreover, the Thai request, if granted, might "snowball" to the Philippines and Indonesia, and precipitate an arms race with Vietnam.

United States officials have tried to persuade the Thais to buy lower-performance export versions of the plane, but the Thais seem determined to acquire the prestigious, higher-speed, longer-range F-16's. General Arthit sees the United States decision as a test of Thai-American friendship.

Despite difficulties with its United States ally, the Prem government believes that the major challenge to Thai security relates to profound social change, as urbanization, industrialization and political participation are forced on a traditional culture. The tensions caused by the tradition-modernity conflict are the crucial problems in modern Thai politics. In the past, the Thai leadership has shown a remarkable ability to blend tradition and modernity. The present challenges demand no less astute leadership. ■

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